KIM

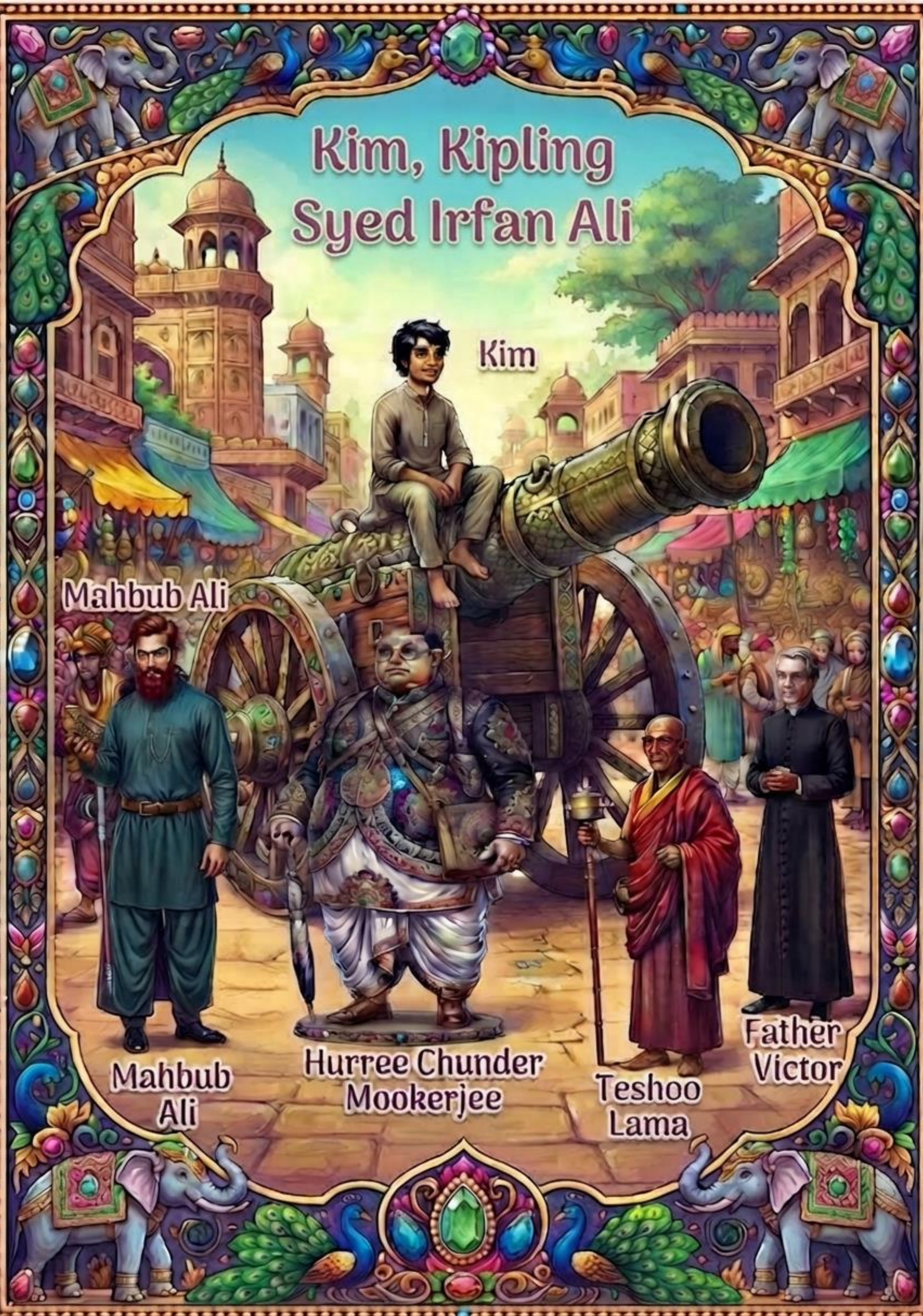
by Rudyard Kipling

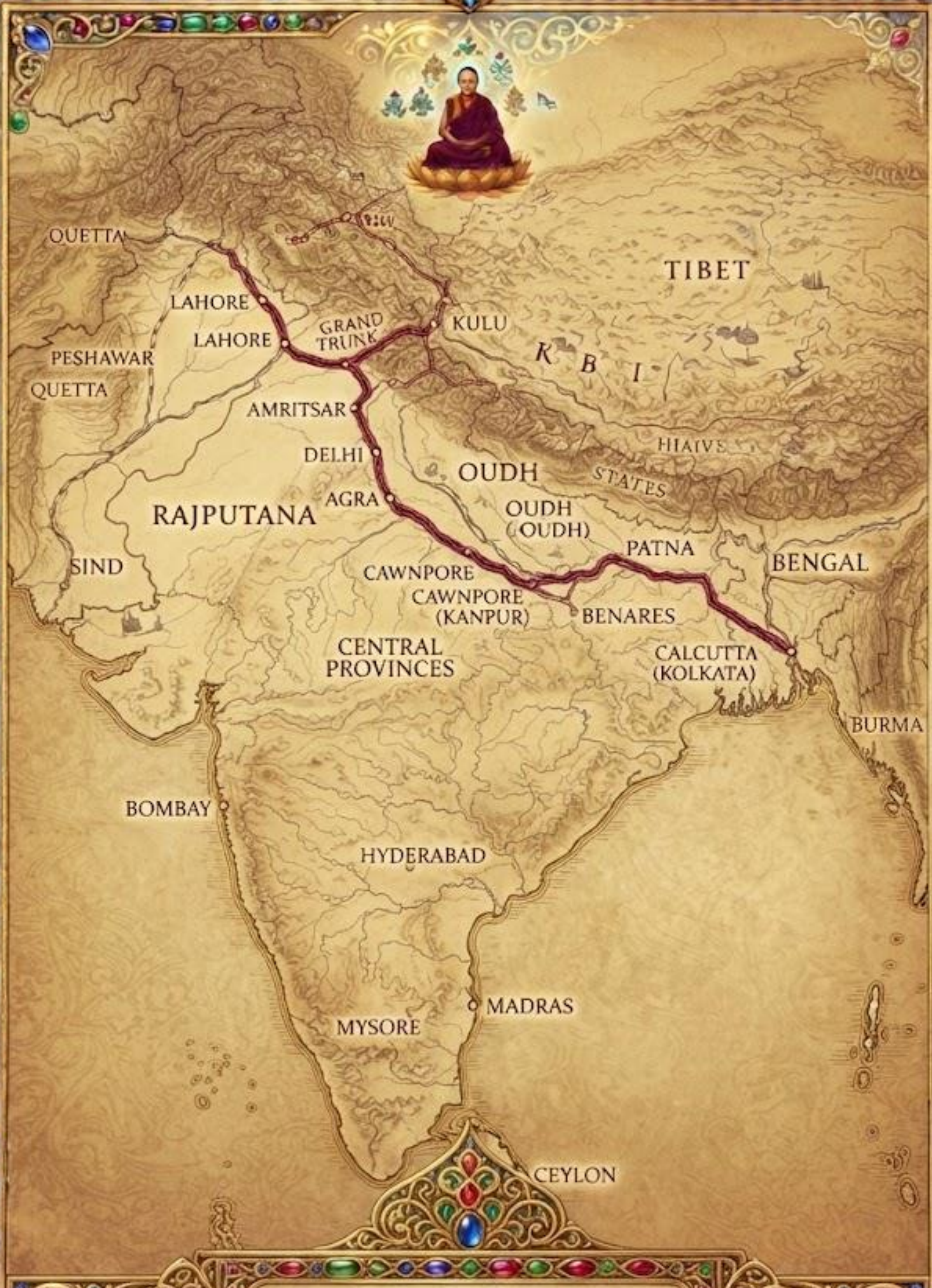
KIM, Rudyard Kipling

translated by:
Syed Irfan Ali

Kim, Kipling

Syed Irfan Ali


Kim
Mahbub Ali
Mahbub Ali
Hurree Chunder Mookerjee
Teshoo Lama
Father Victor


QUETTA
TIBET
LAHORE
GRAND TRUNK
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PESHAWAR
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DELHI
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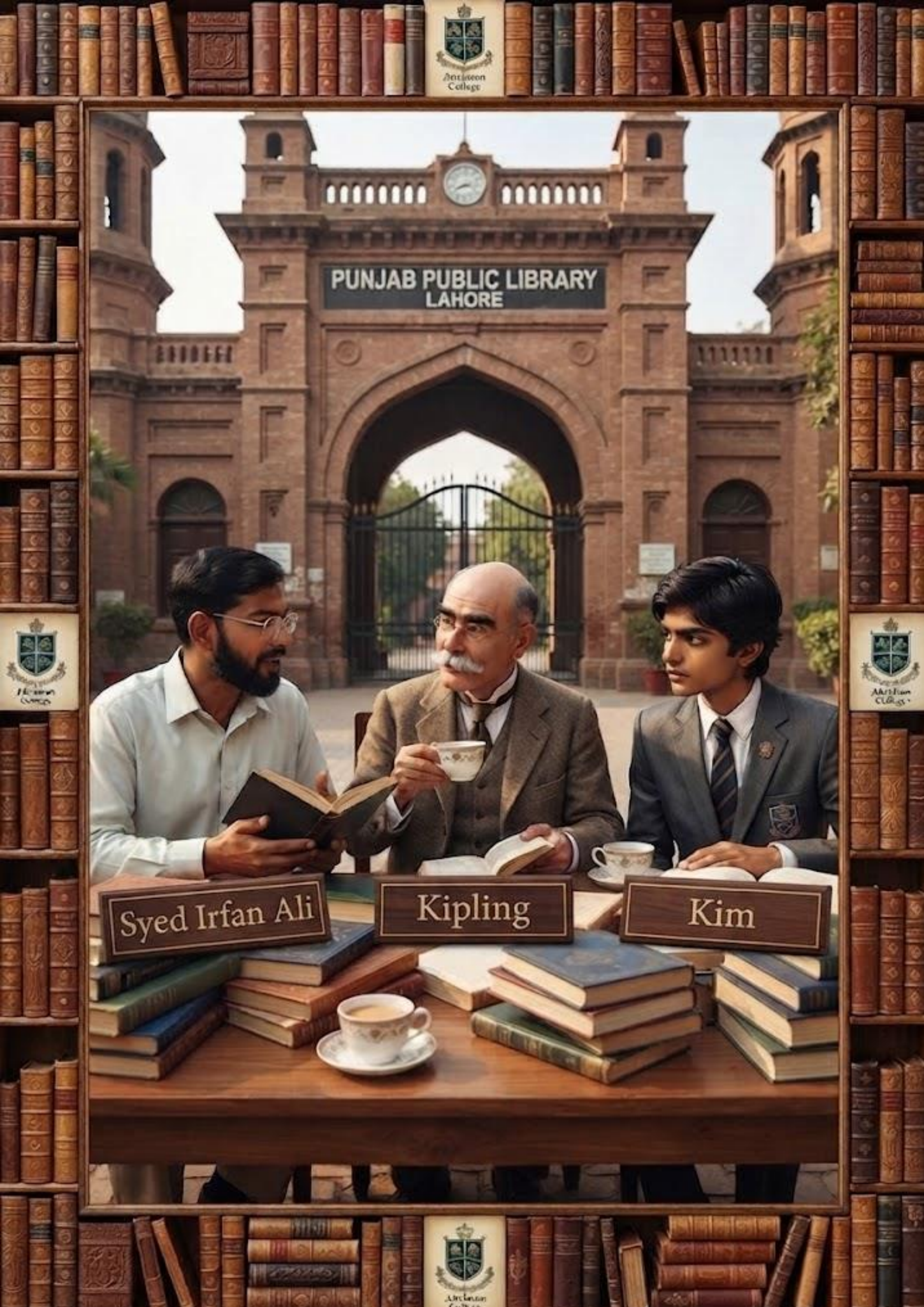
STATES
AGRA
RAJPUTANA
OUDH (OUDH)
PATNA
BENGAL
SIND
CAWNPORE
CAWNPORE (KANPUR)
BENARES
CENTRAL PROVINCES
CALCUTTA (KOLKATA)
BURMA
BOMBAY
HYDERABAD
MADRAS
MYSORE
CEYLON

THE JOURNEYS OF KIM – A MAP OF UNITED INDIA


PUNJAB PUBLIC LIBRARY
LAHORE
Syed Irfan Ali
Kipling
Kim

Kim

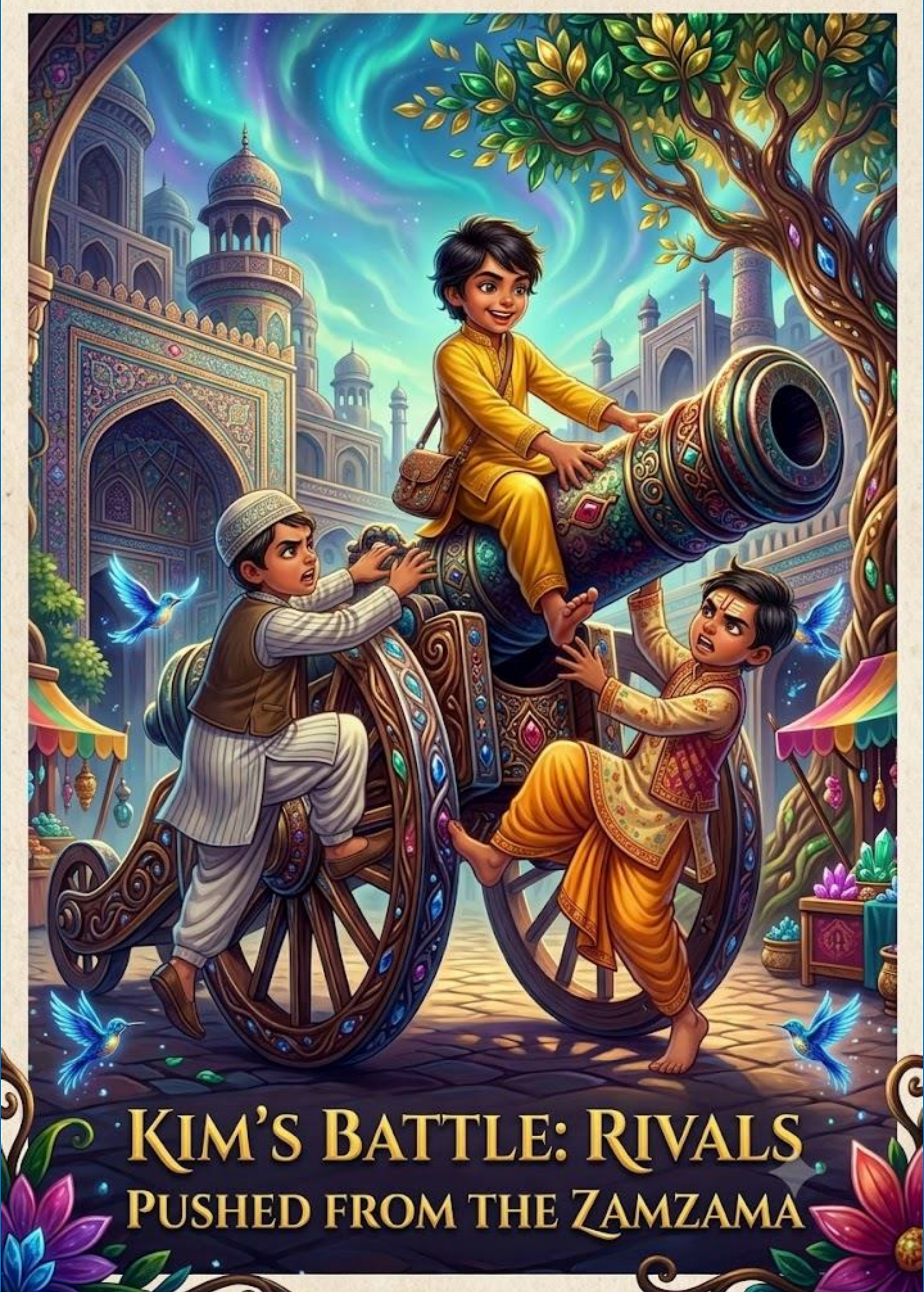
Rudyard Kipling

Syed Irfan Ali

Zamzama is the name of the cannon
that stands in front of the Lahore Museum.
Sitting on it was forbidden,
but a boy named "Kim" was comfortably perched atop it.
It would be more fitting to call it a fire-breathing dragon rather than a cannon. Whoever conquered the Punjab would first take possession of this Zamzama cannon. This boy, Kim, was English, and since the English ruled over the Punjab, he too had the right to sit on this cannon.

KIM'S ADVENTURE THE ZAMZAMA GUN

He had just kicked his friend, Lala Dina Nath's son, knocked him down from the gun.


KIM'S BATTLE: RIVALS
PUSHED FROM THE ZAMZAMA

Although, like any other boy in India, Kim's skin had turned dark. Although he spoke Urdu just as fluently as the other boys, befriended the other boys in the bazaar, and lived life just as they did, the reality was that he was actually English. A very poor white English boy.

Let us look toward Kim's parents.

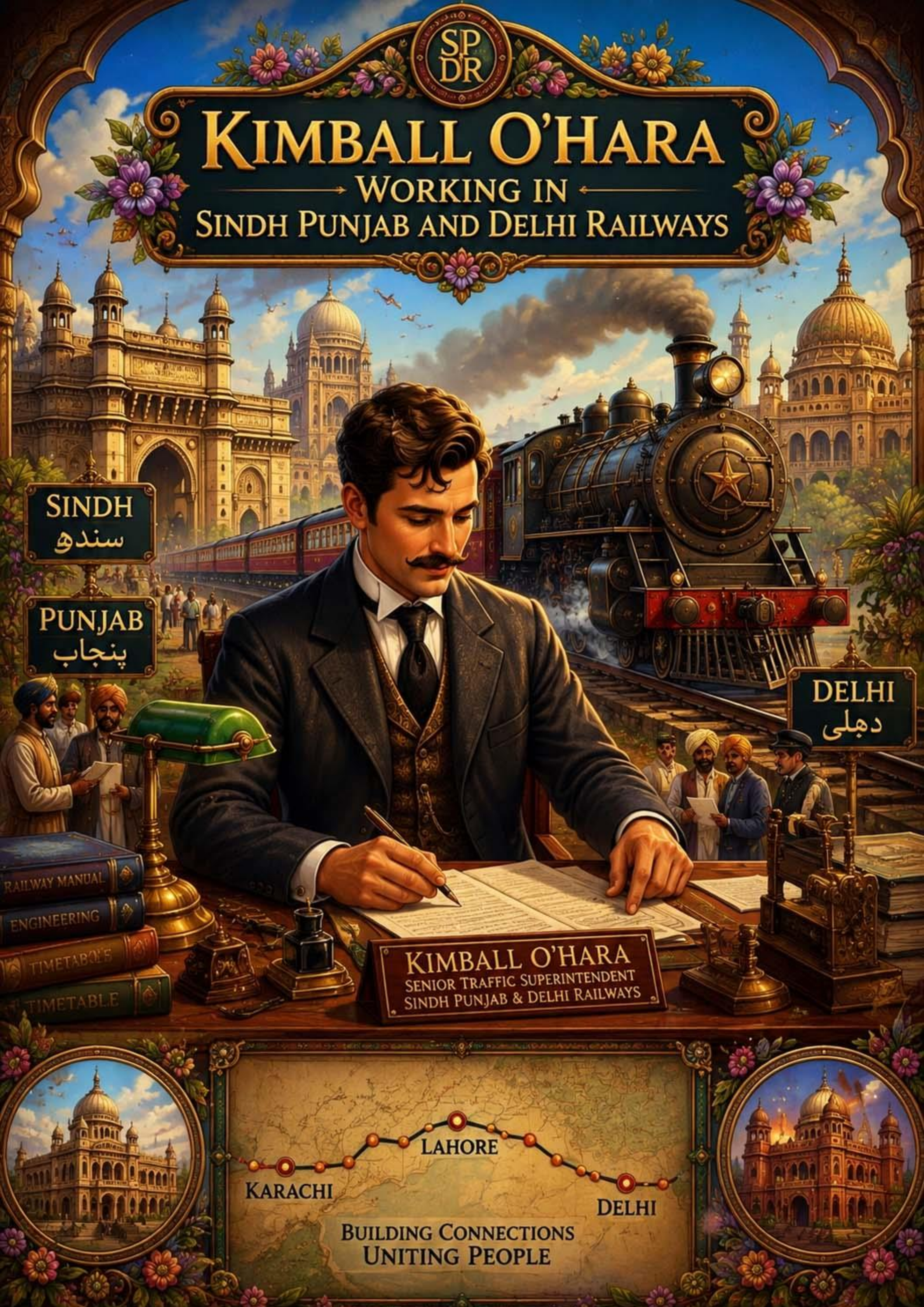
Kim's father's name was Kimball O'Hara, who was employed in the military, and his mother worked in the household of a military officer.

RUDYARD KIPLING

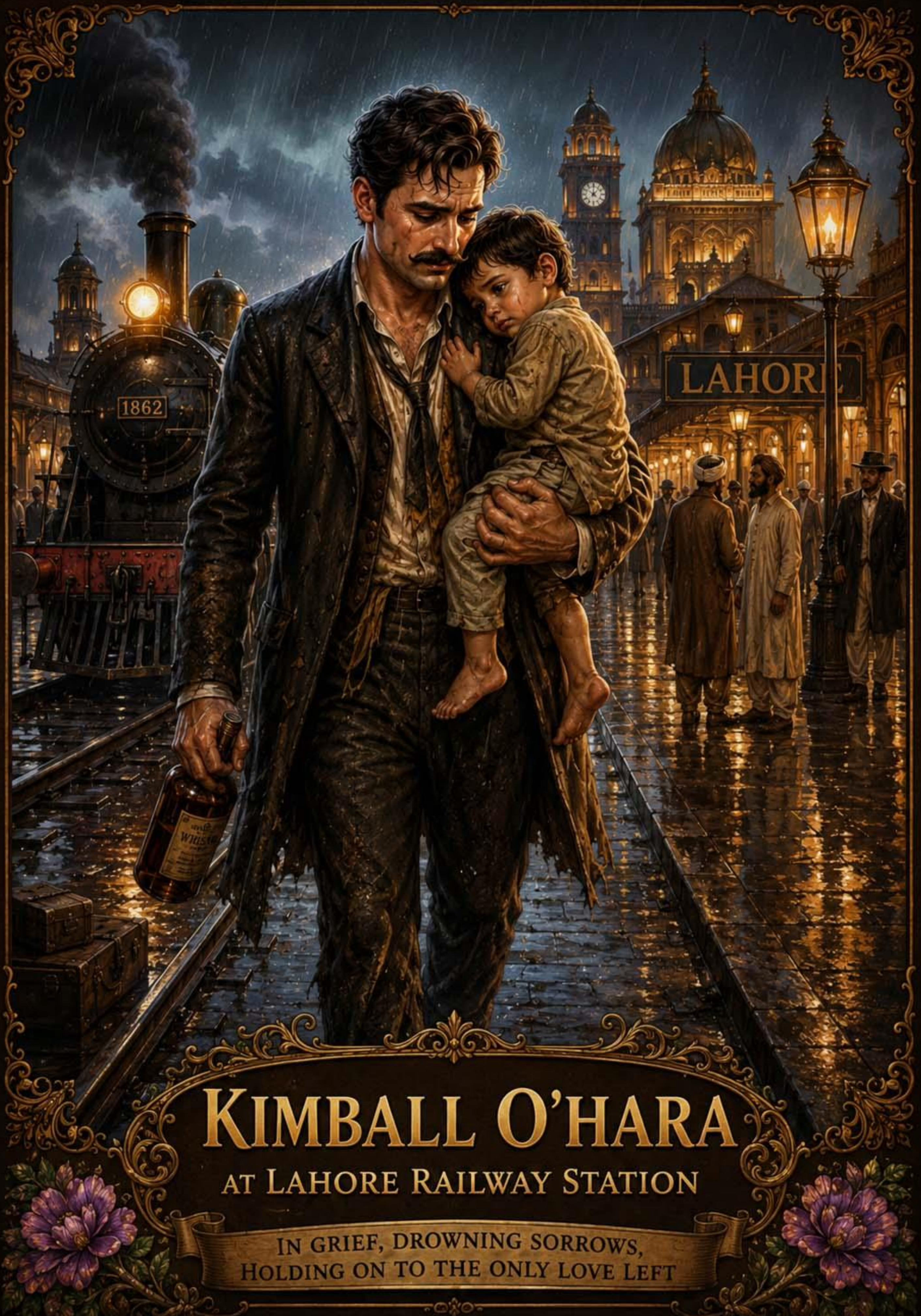
KIM

KIMBALL O'HARA WITH HIS WIFE AND BABY

His father left his military service to take up employment with the railway, working for the Sindh, Punjab & Delhi Railway.


SP DR
KIMBALL O'HARA
WORKING IN
SINDH PUNJAB AND DELHI RAILWAYS
SINDH
سندھ
PUNJAB
پنجاب
DELHI
دھلی
RAILWAY MANUAL
ENGINEERING
TIMETABLE
KIMBALL O'HARA
SENIOR TRAFFIC SUPERINTENDENT
SINDH PUNJAB & DELHI RAILWAYS
LAHORE
KARACHI
DELHI
BUILDING CONNECTIONS
UNITING PEOPLE

When Kim's mother died of illness in Ferozepur, his father began drinking heavily and wandered around distraught along the railway line, taking his handsome three-year-old son with him.

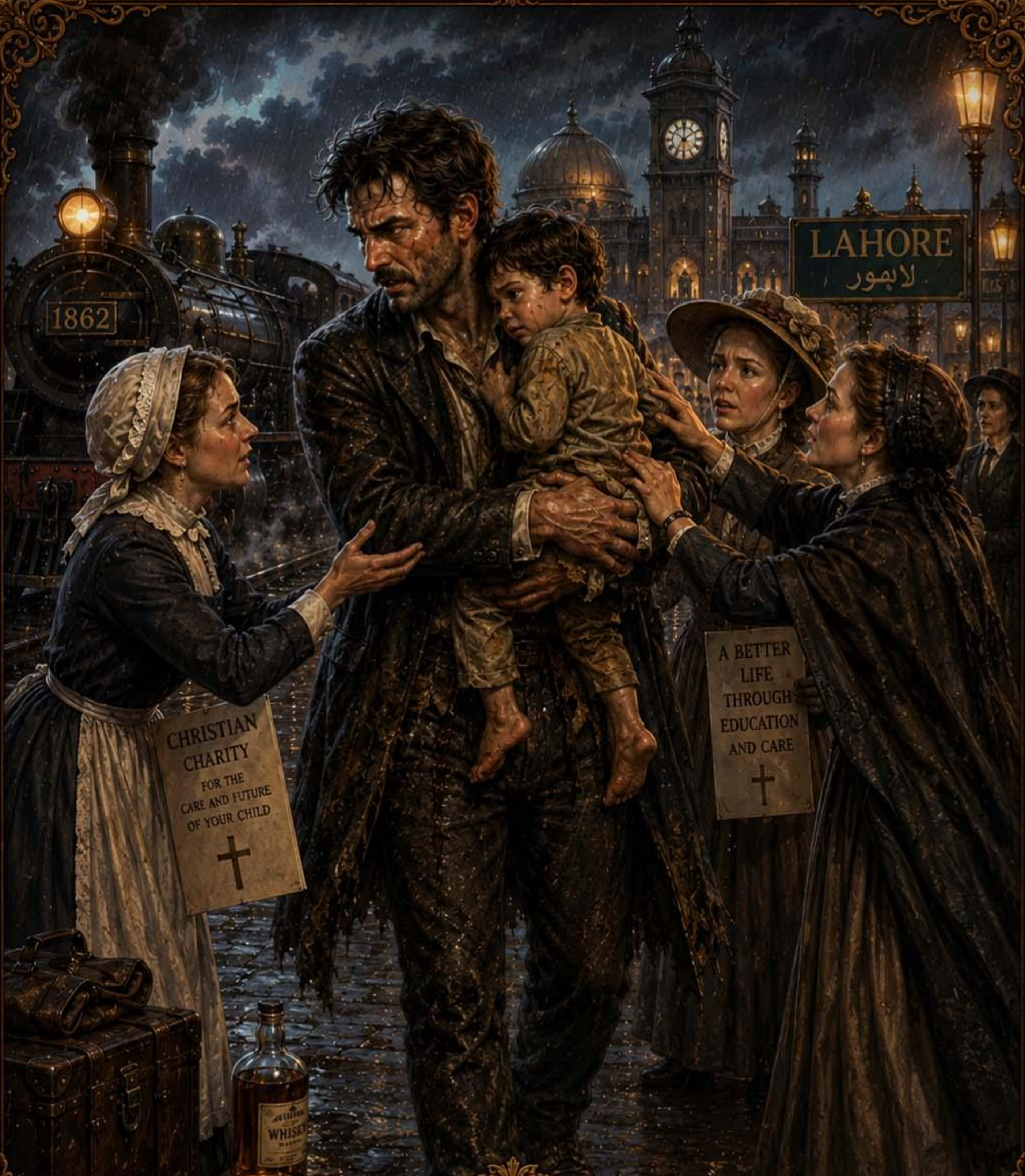

1862
LAHORE
WHISKY

KIMBALL O'HARA

AT LAHORE RAILWAY STATION

IN GRIEF, DROWNING SORROWS,
HOLDING ON TO THE ONLY LOVE LEFT

When benevolent and good-hearted Englishmen saw him, they would try to take the child from him to provide him with a proper education and upbringing, but his father would keep dodging them, avoiding their reach with the boy.


1862
LAHORE
لابهور
CHRISTIAN CHARITY FOR THE CARE AND FUTURE OF YOUR CHILD
A BETTER LIFE THROUGH EDUCATION AND CARE
WHISKY

KIMBALL O'HARA

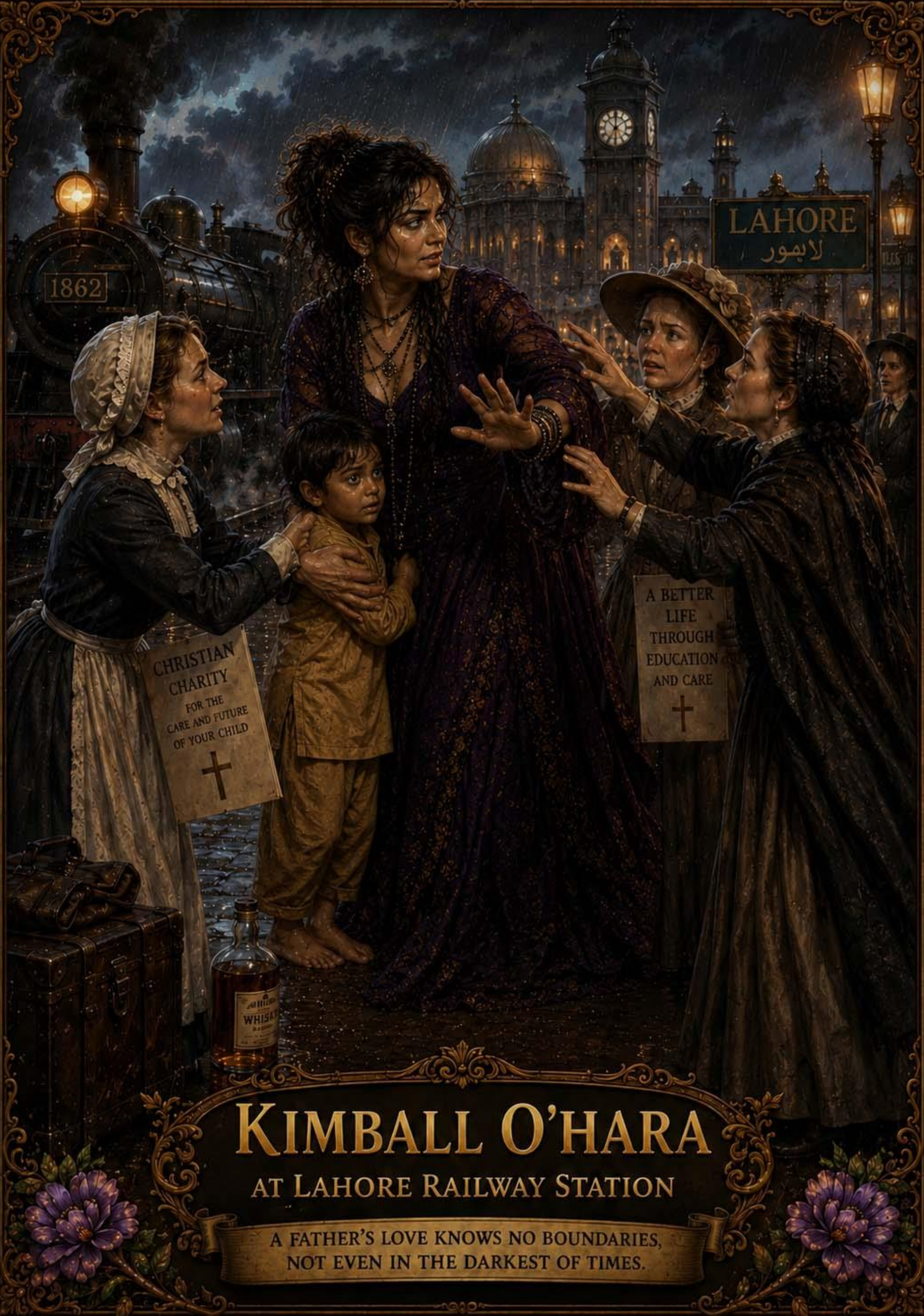
AT LAHORE RAILWAY STATION

A FATHER'S LOVE KNOWS NO BOUNDARIES,
NOT EVEN IN THE DARKEST OF TIMES.

Then he met a woman who was herself an addict and also sold intoxicants, although to the world, she was running a used furniture shop. Kim's father began consuming heavily off of her supply and died one day.

After that, that woman began looking after Kim.

When benevolent people tried to take the child from her, she would say that she was his aunt.


1862
LAHORE
لاہور
CHRISTIAN CHARITY
FOR THE CARE AND FUTURE OF YOUR CHILD
A BETTER LIFE THROUGH EDUCATION AND CARE
WHISKY

KIMBALL O'HARA

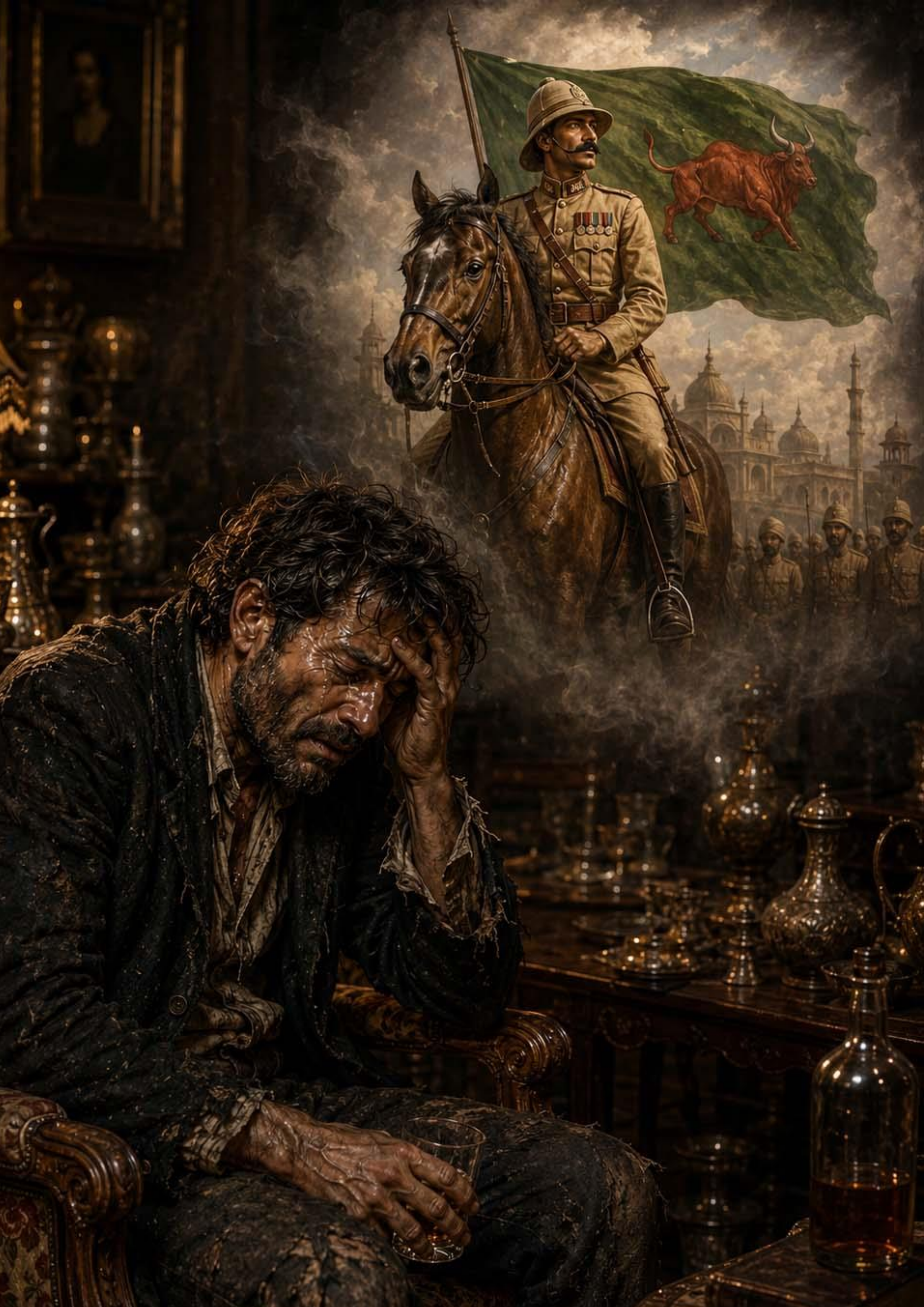
AT LAHORE RAILWAY STATION

A FATHER'S LOVE KNOWS NO BOUNDARIES,
NOT EVEN IN THE DARKEST OF TIMES.

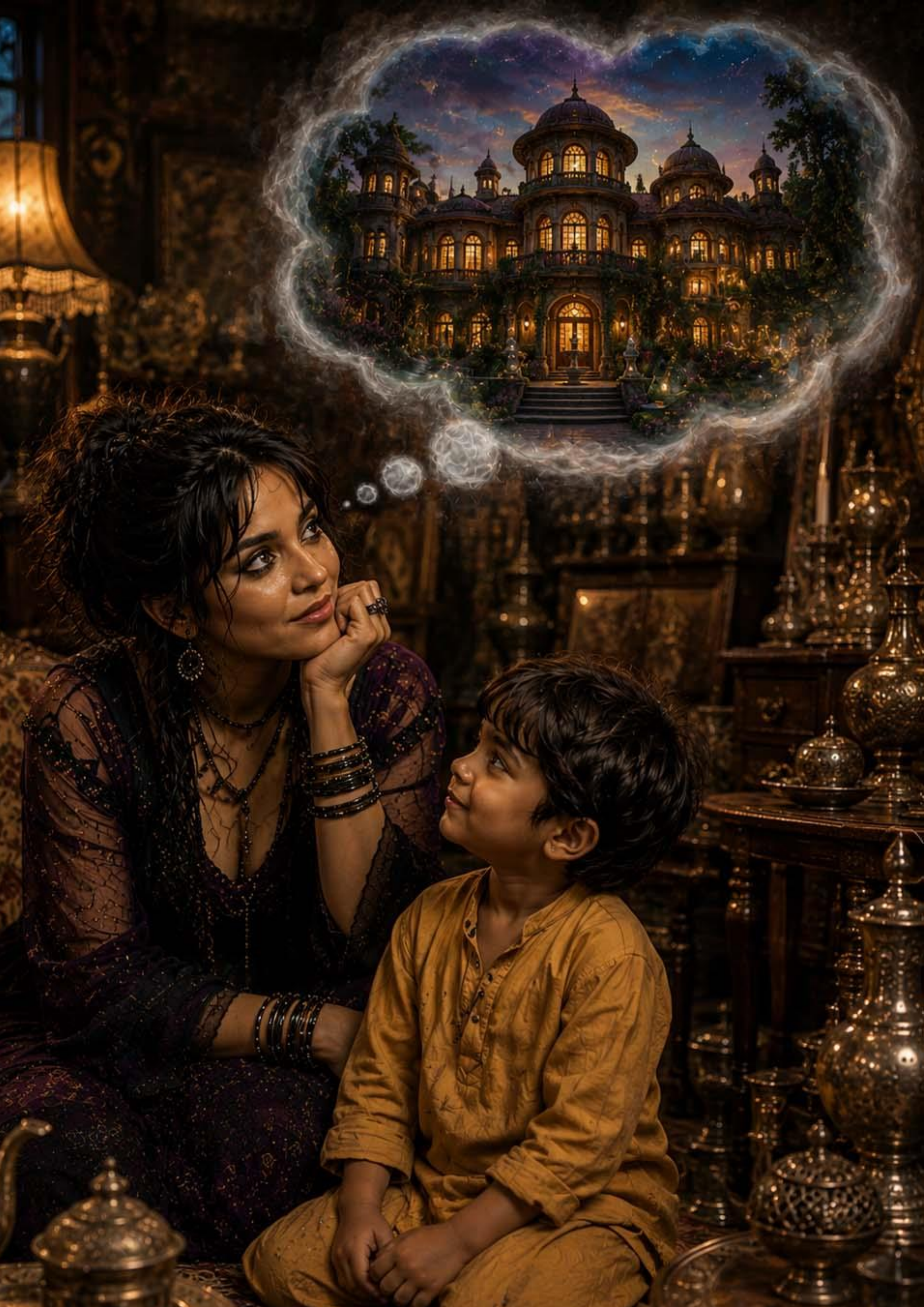
At his last hour, Kim's father gave him three documents: first, a will; second, a certificate of clearance for his good reputation; and third, the important document of Kim's birth certificate.

That woman put these items inside a small leather amulet and hung it around Kim's neck so they would not be lost.

When in a state of severe intoxication, his father would say that these things would one day be of great use to Kim, making him a very great man and bestowing great glory upon him. In his view, these items possessed magical influence, just as the magicians in the Magic House behind the museum transformed things through magic. His father used to say that a colonel from a magnificent army, riding a grand horse, would come to meet Kim—if he still remembered his soldier, who was now living a life of poverty near the Ferozepur railway line. He would also mention a red bull-bullock on a green field, which was the badge of that army's regiment. Having said this, he would sit on a broken chair in his veranda and weep for a very long time.

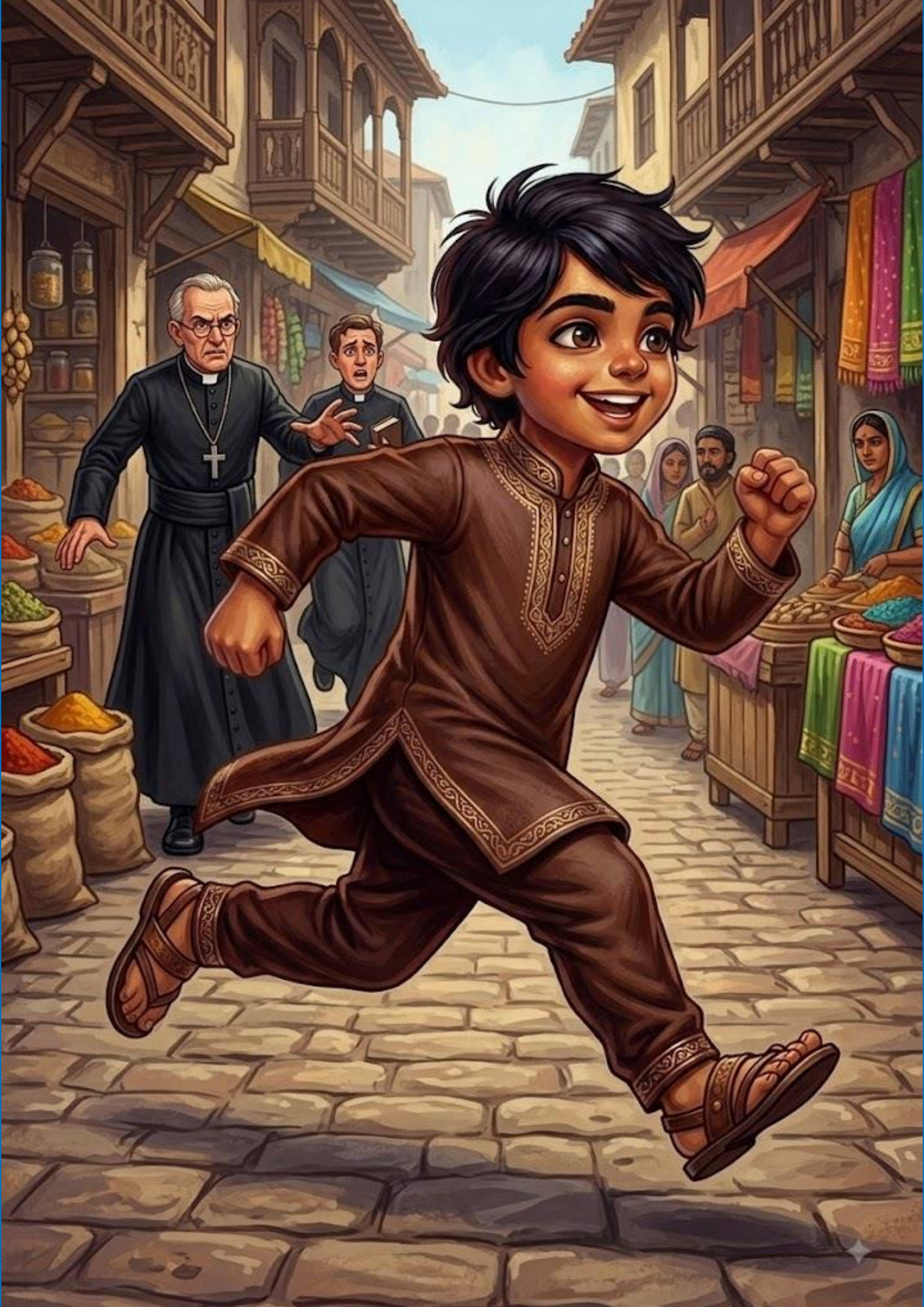


The woman raising Kim, remembering his father's words, would occasionally tell him about them, and Kim would say, "Yes, I will remember these things." That woman would sometimes think of sending Kim to the Magic House with these items, but then the thought would occur to her that those people might send Kim off to an orphanage instead. In truth, she simply had no faith in the magician's words and wonders.

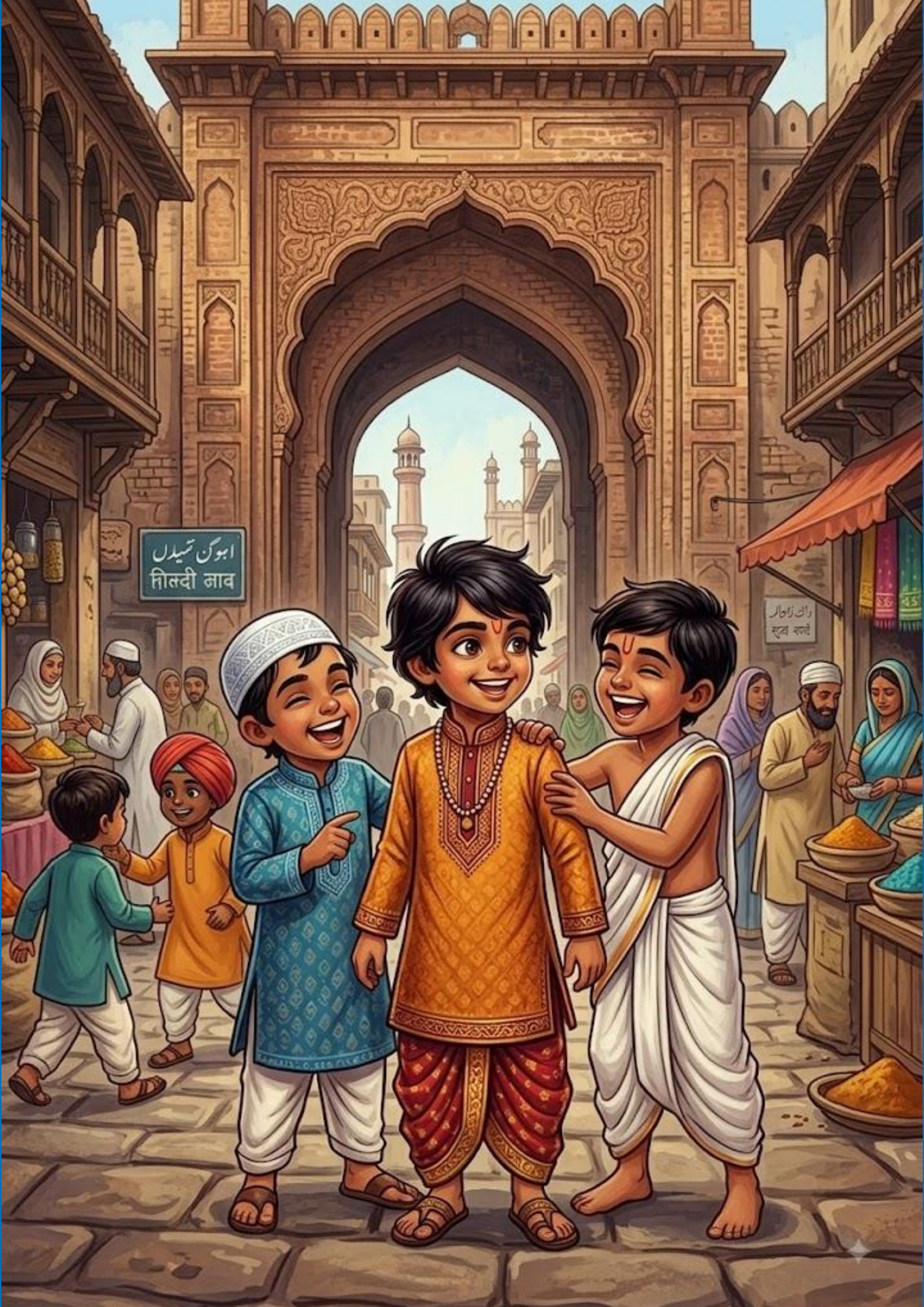


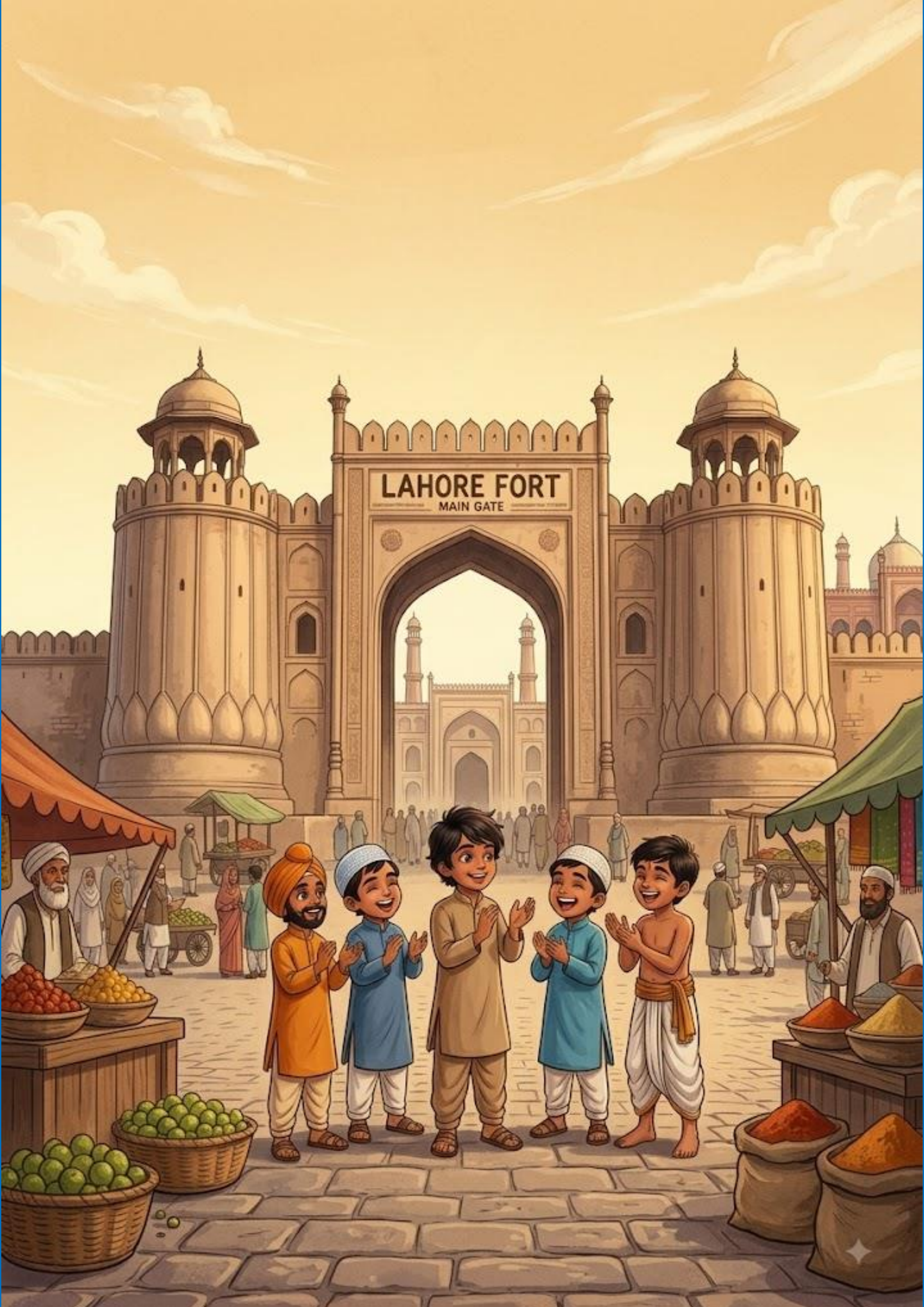
Now let us return to Kim again.

Kim had his own mind, and whenever the white Englishmen from charitable institutions inquired about him to provide him with an education and upbringing, he would evade them and slip away.

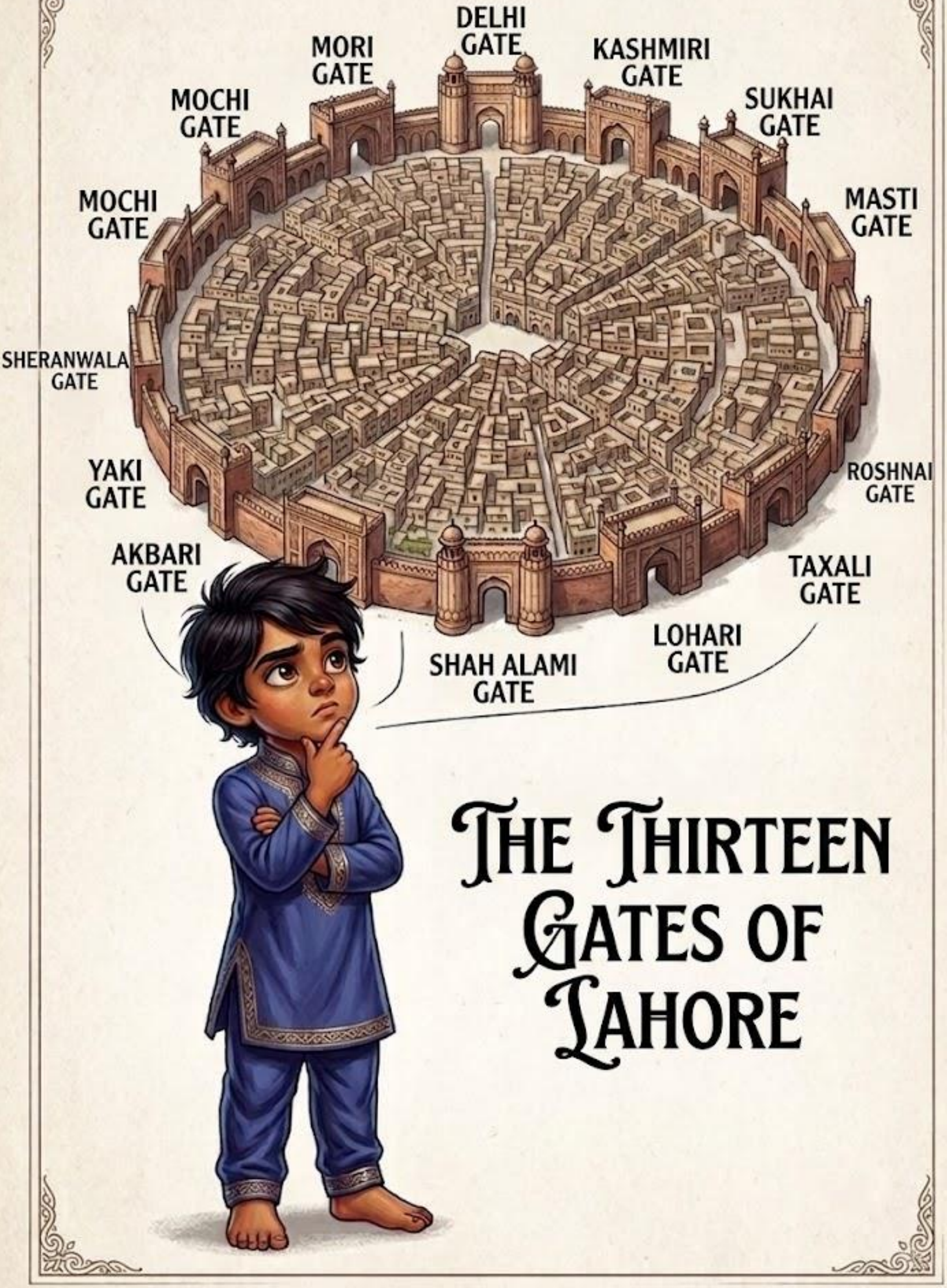


In truth, he loved the streets of Lahore city and its gates—from Delhi Gate all the way to the Royal Fort.


ابوگن تسیدل
तिलदी माव

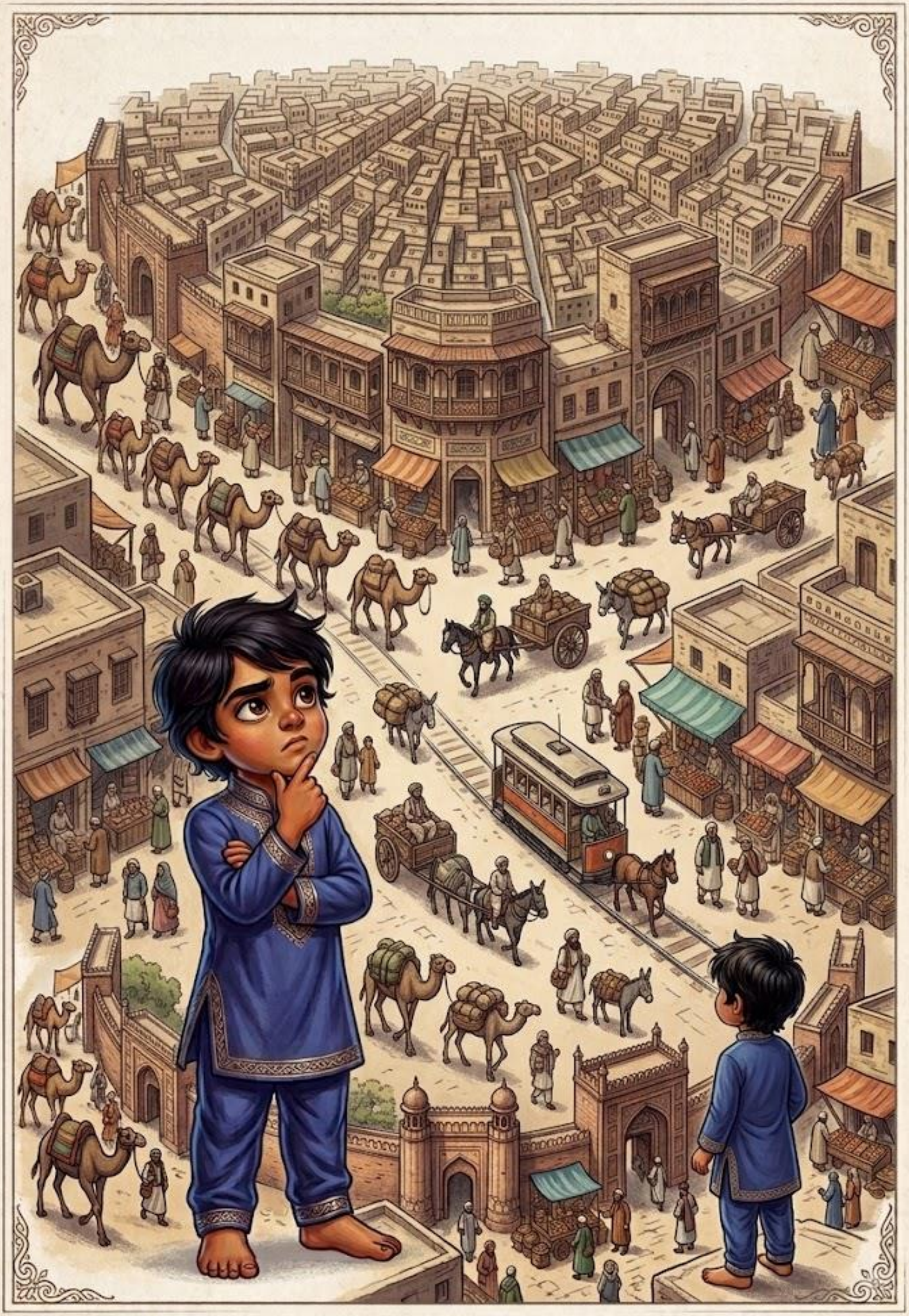

LAHORE FORT
MAIN GATE

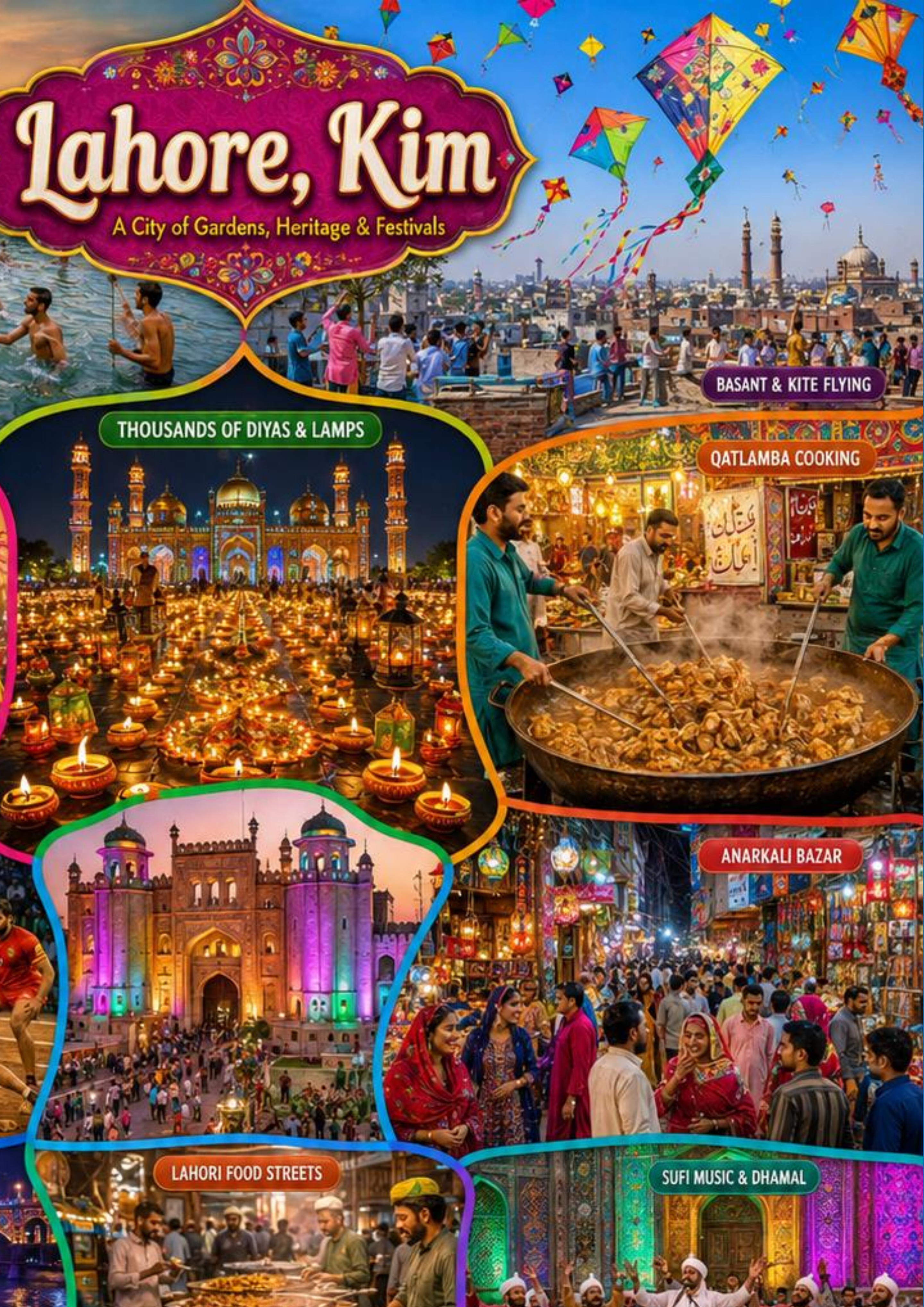
In fact, he knew the pathways of Lahore settled within its thirteen gates.

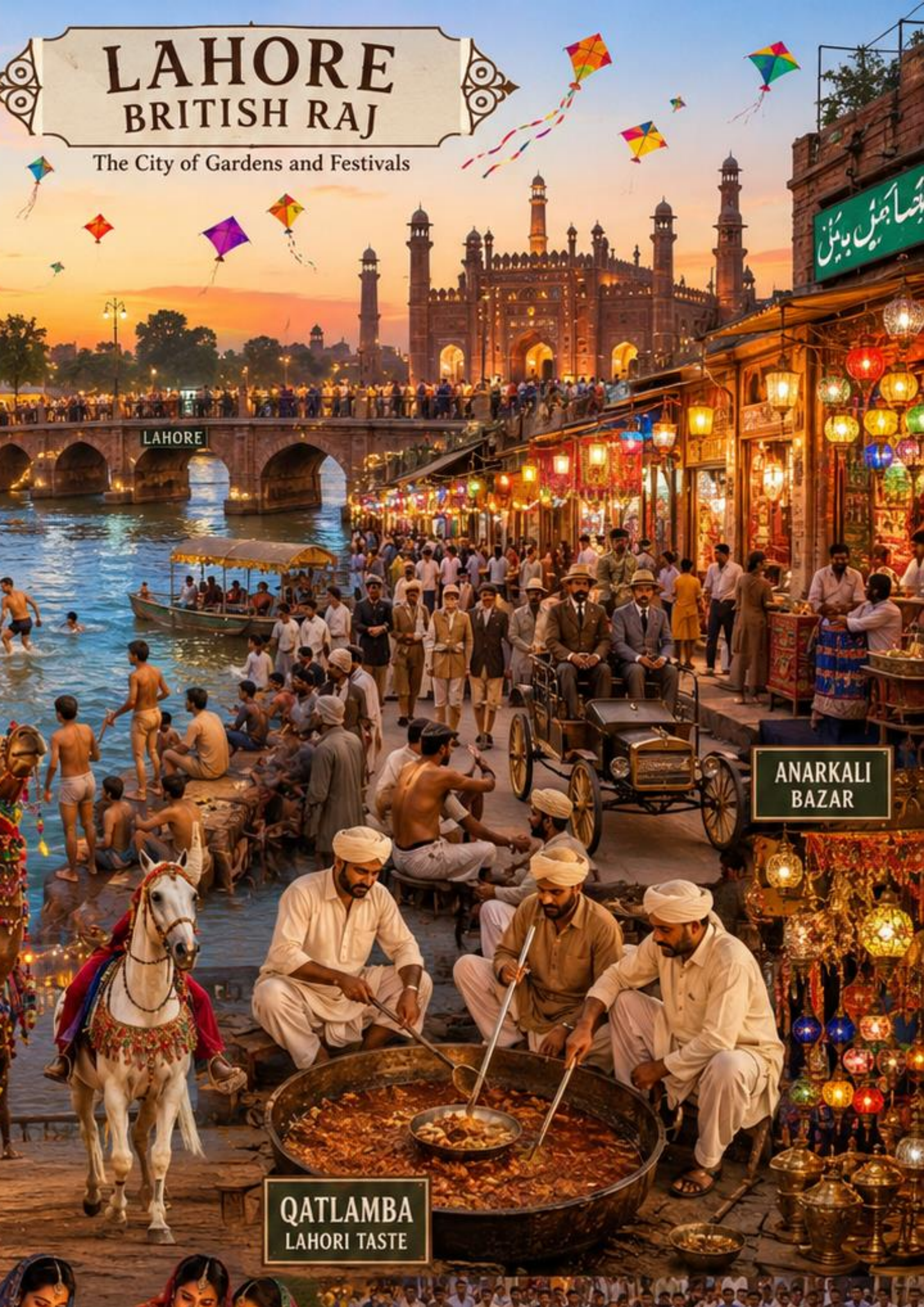

DELHI GATE
MORI GATE
KASHMIRI GATE
MOCHI GATE
SUKHAI GATE
MOCHI GATE
MASTI GATE
SHERANWALA GATE
YAKI GATE
ROSHNAI GATE
AKBARI GATE
TAXALI GATE
LOHARI GATE
SHAH ALAMI GATE

THE THIRTEEN GATES OF LAHORE

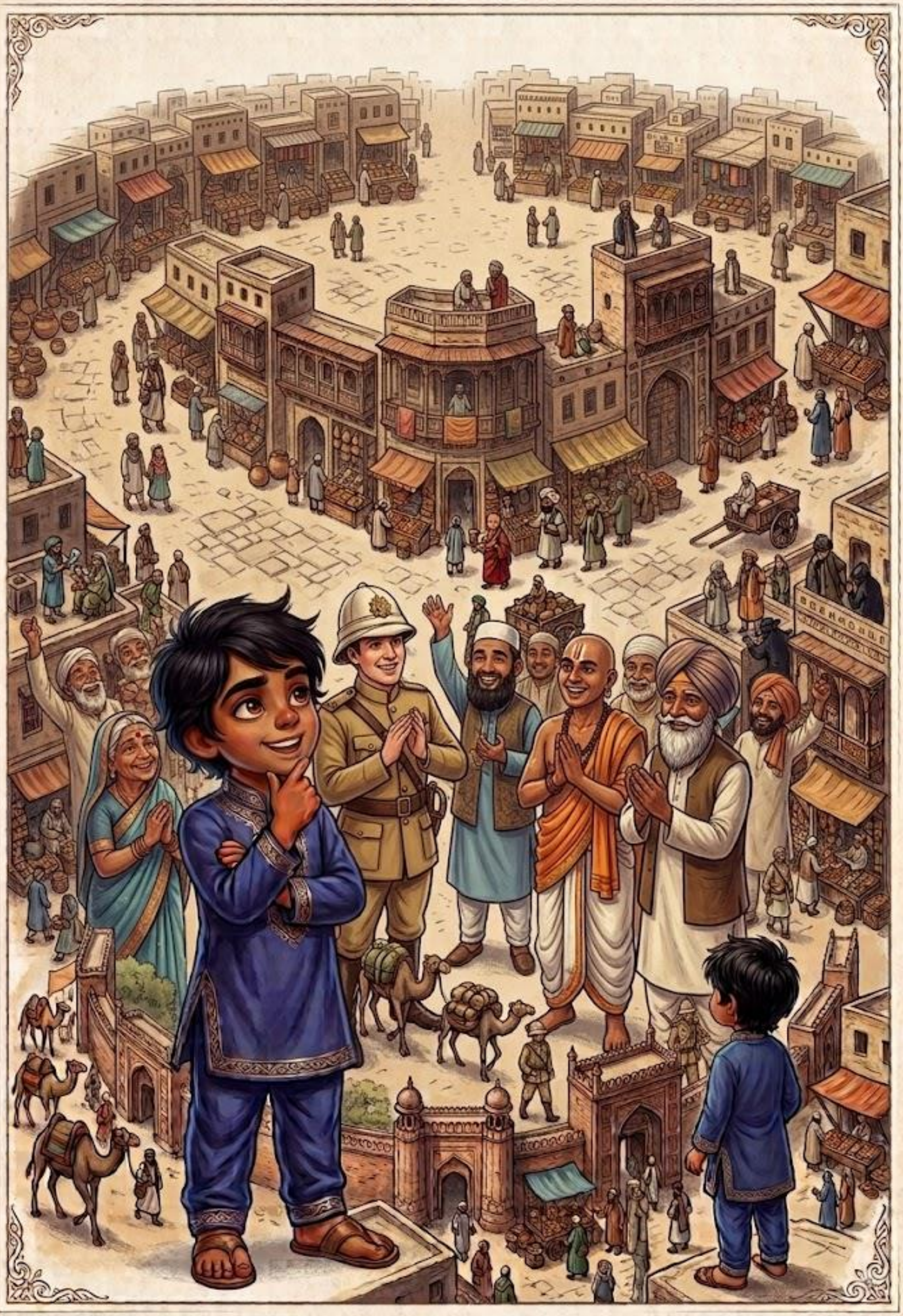
And residing there, he also knew all those people who led such wondrous lives that even a king like Harun al-Rashid could only imagine in his dreams. They lived the kind of lives mentioned in the tales of the *One Thousand and One Nights*. But the charitable institutions could not even conceive of how splendid a life Kim was living.



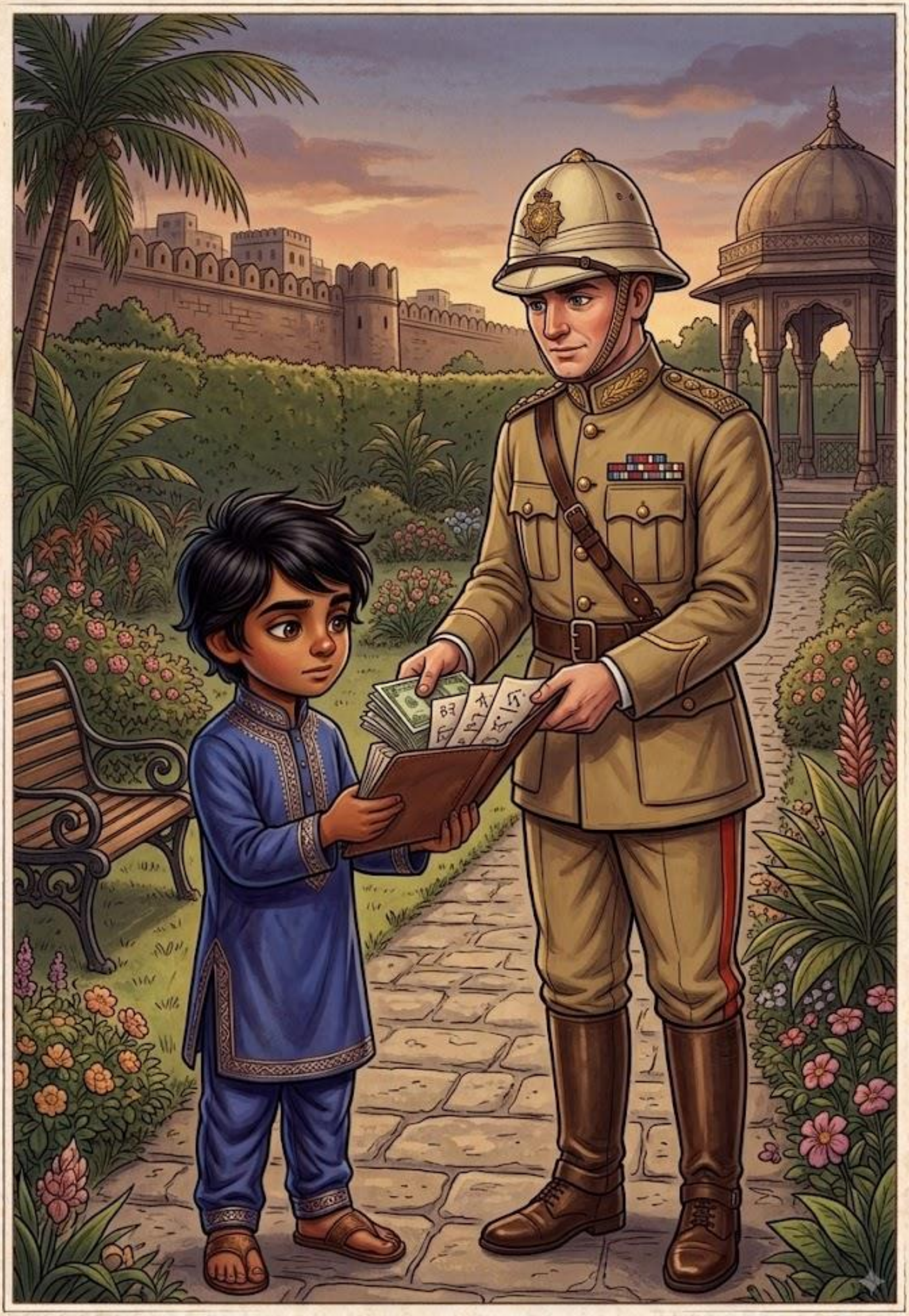

Lahore, Kim
A City of Gardens, Heritage & Festivals
BASANT & KITE FLYING
THOUSANDS OF DIYAS & LAMPS
QATLAMBA COOKING
ANARKALI BAZAR
LAHORI FOOD STREETS
SUFI MUSIC & DHAMAL


LAHORE
BRITISH RAJ
The City of Gardens and Festivals
LAHORE
ANARKALI BAZAR
QATLAMBA
LAHORI TASTE

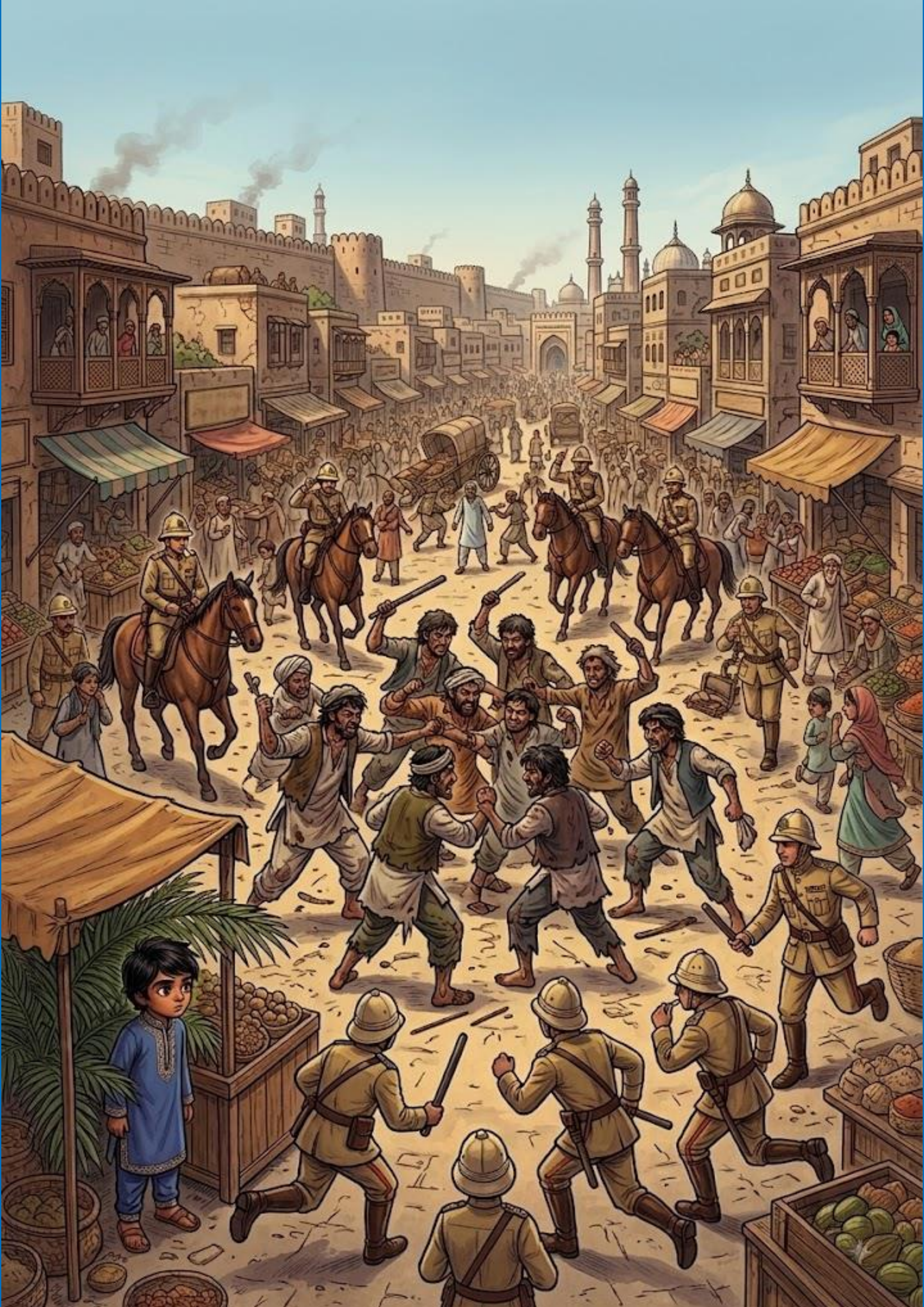
People loved him and called him "Little Friend of all the World" (*Chota Mhabub Alam*).



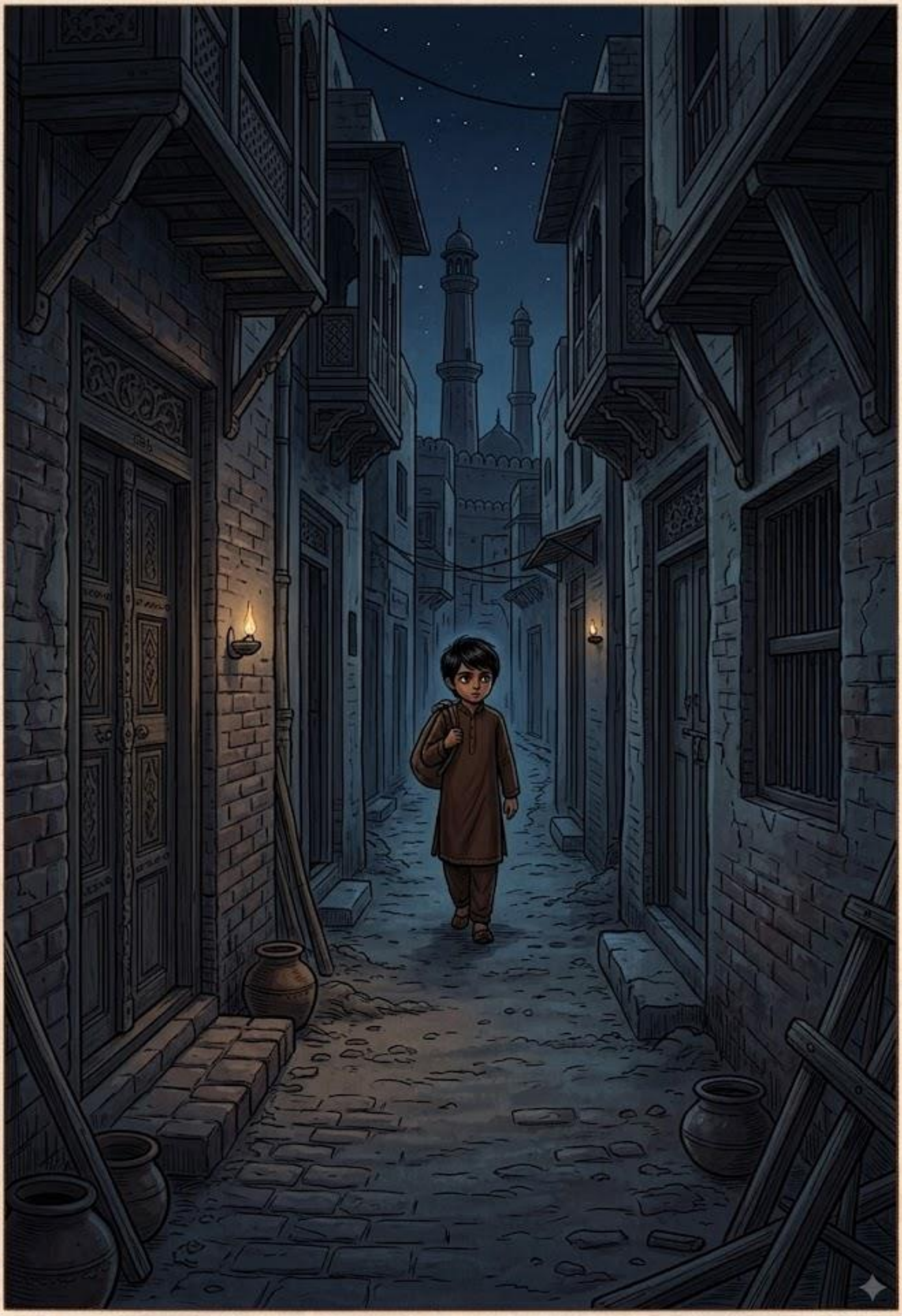
At times, Kim would also carry out grand and important tasks for important people. He was well aware that these were, in fact, acts of espionage.



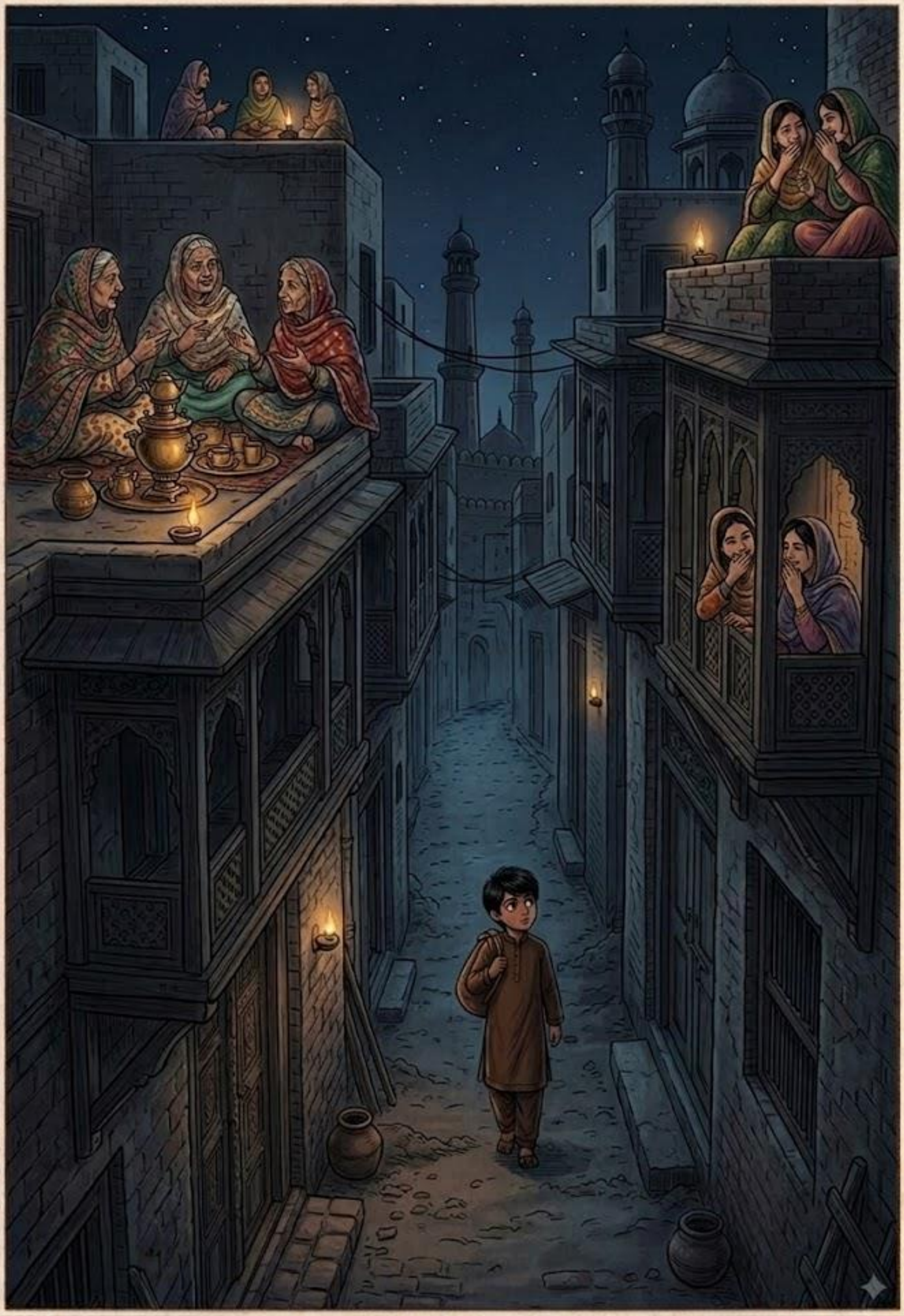
Ever since he came of age, the evils present in the world had come into his view. However, performing tasks such as espionage was something he truly enjoyed.



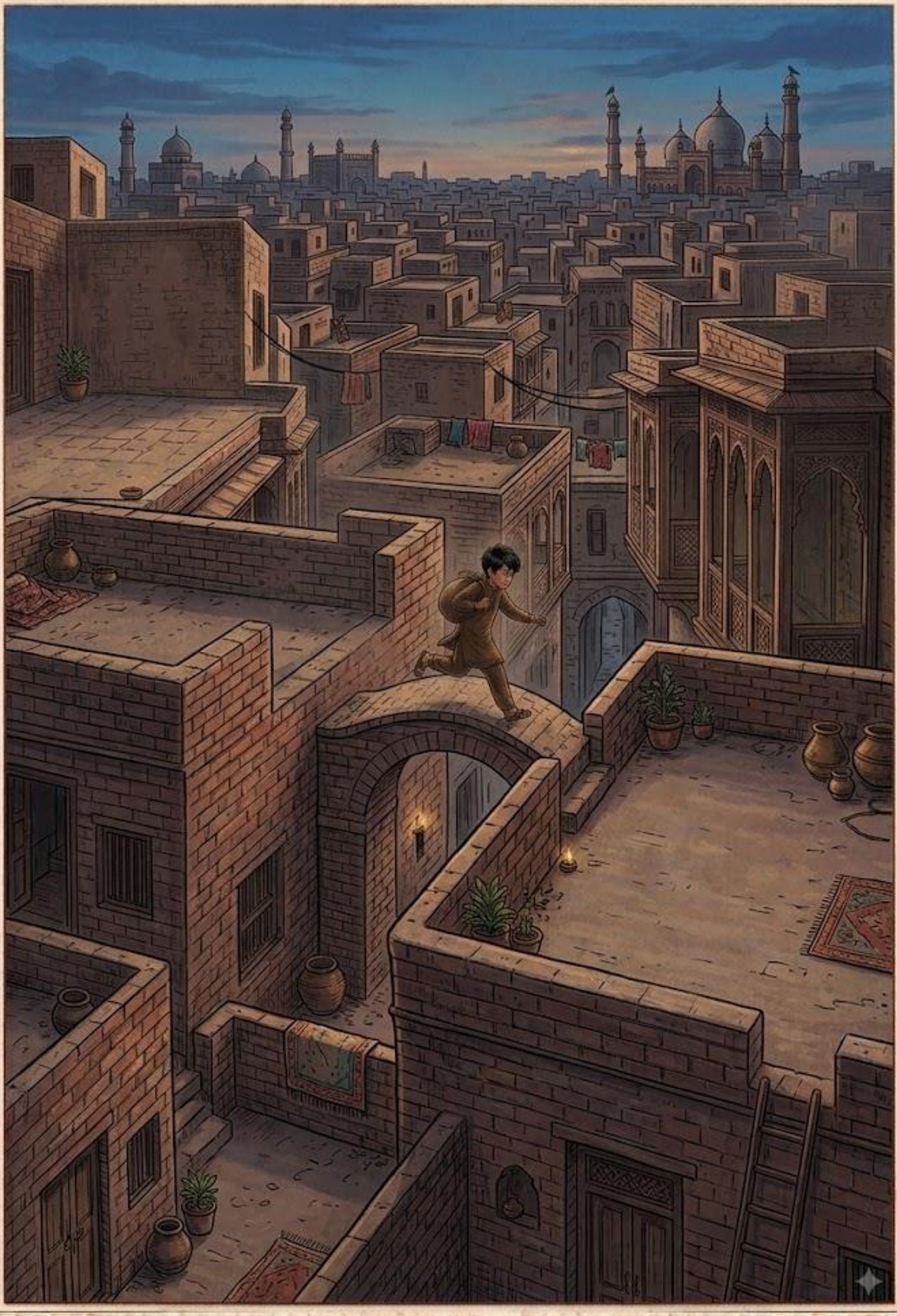
He would pass through streets that were deserted and dark.



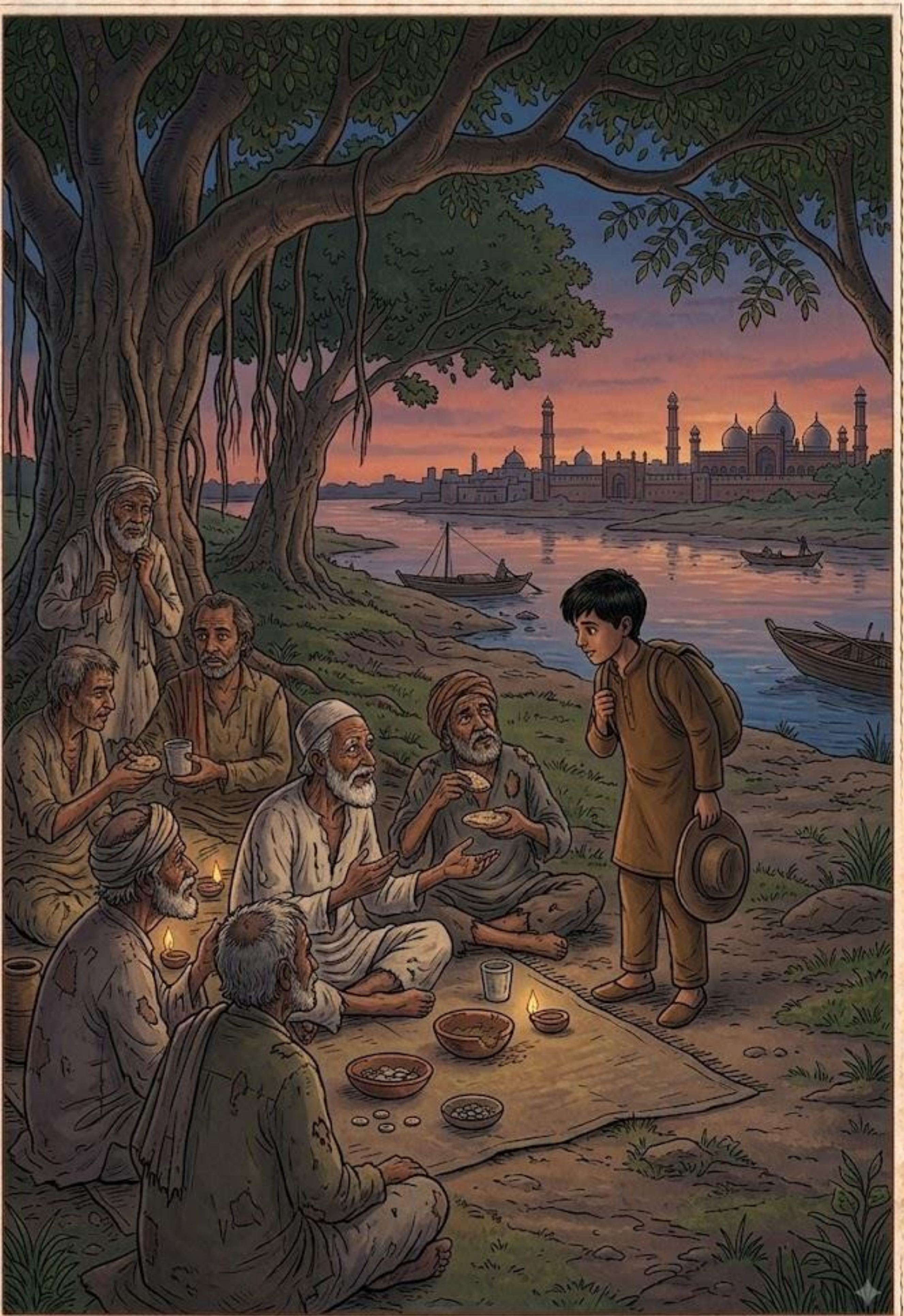
He would hear the women sitting on the rooftops talking to one another.



At times, in the hot weather, he would complete his long journey simply by jumping across the rooftops of the houses.

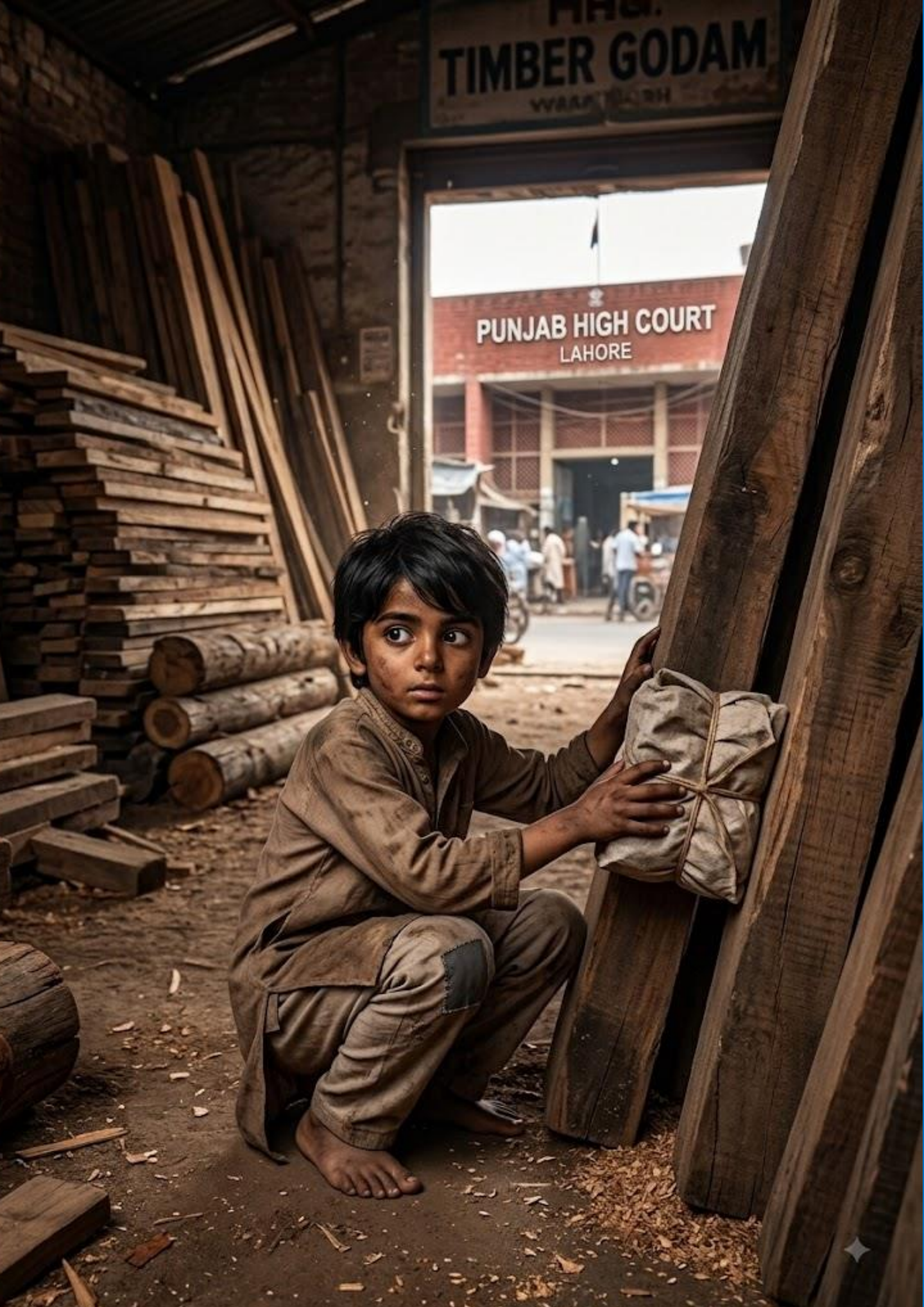


He was also well acquainted with the faqirs who sat under the trees by the banks of the Ravi River. When they returned after begging for alms, Kim would exchange greetings with them and watch them eat their meals together.



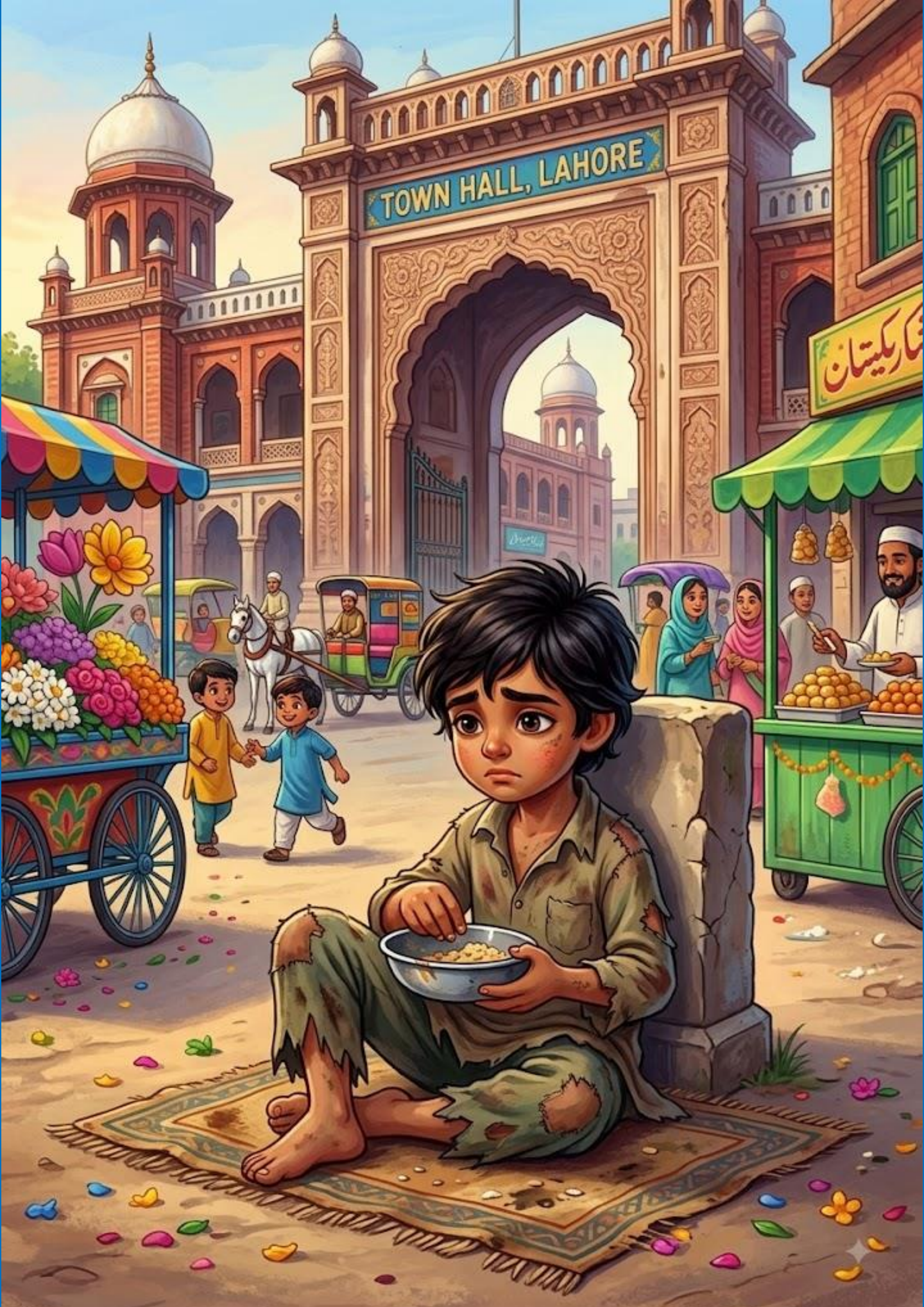
The woman taking care of him would weep and say, "Kim, you should wear English clothes, along with their shoes and hat." But whenever Kim went on a secret espionage mission, he would dress as a poor Muslim or Hindu to avoid drawing attention.

A fashionable young man had given him the complete attire of a Hindu boy, but sadly, one night a severe earthquake struck, and that man's body was found inside a well. Kim had hidden those clothes in a secret spot between the logs at Nila Ram's timber yard near the Punjab High Court.


TIMBER GODAM
PUNJAB HIGH COURT
LAHORE

On special occasions, such as when he went on a mission, or during a Hindu festival or wedding ceremony, Kim would wear those clothes.

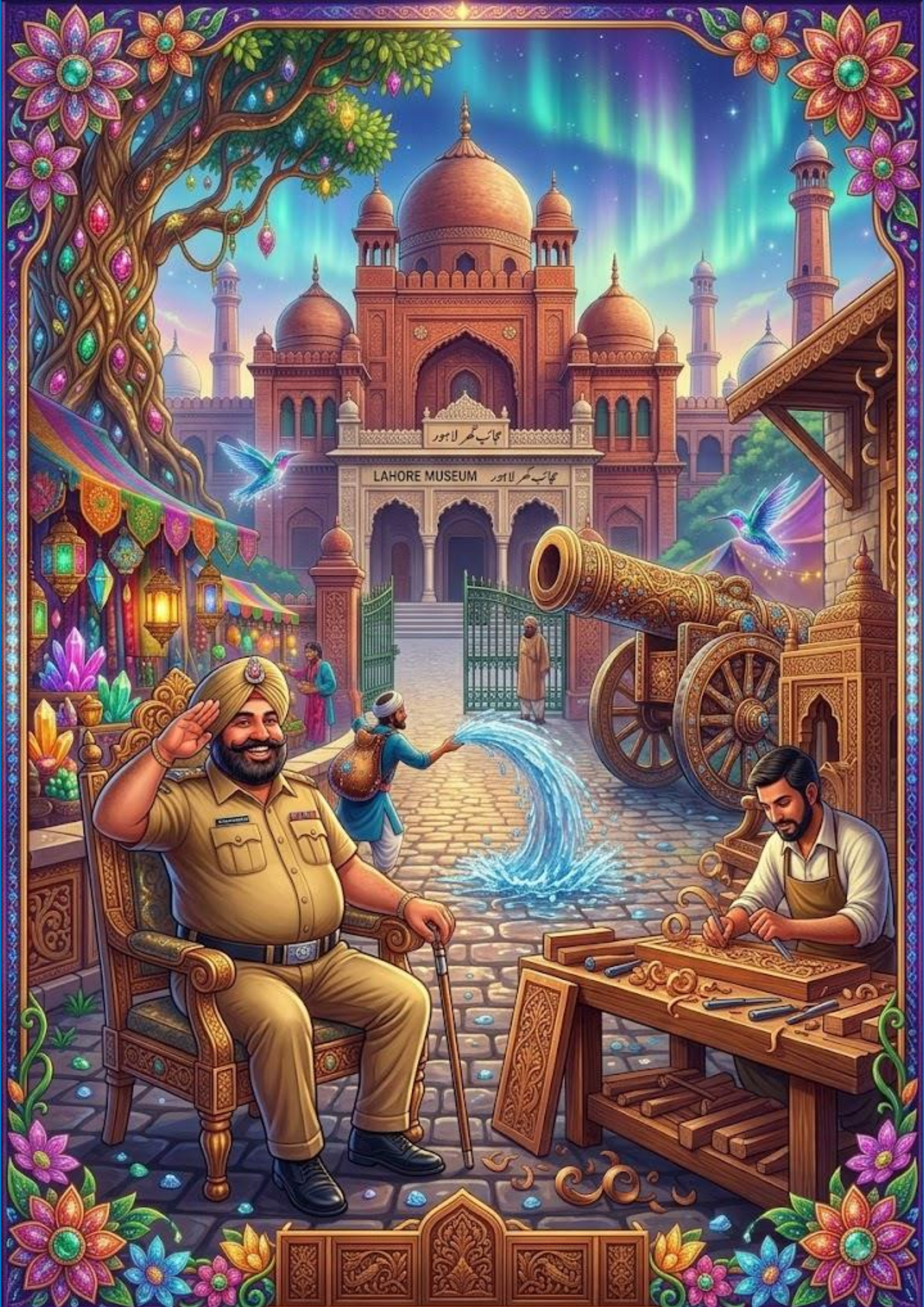
Poor Kim would sometimes find food at home, and at other times, he would beg for food and eat alongside his Hindu and Muslim friends.


TOWN HALL, LAHORE

Seated atop the Zamzama gun, Kim was busily engaged in play with his friends, Chota Lal and Abdullah, the sweetmeat-seller's son.

KIM'S BATTLE: RIVALS PUSHED FROM THE ZAMZAMA

Kim teased the Punjabi guard protecting the museum with a cheeky remark. The soldier endured it, merely muttering his annoyance under his breath, for he had known Kim for a very long time—just as the water-carrier who sprinkled water on the dry dusty roads knew him, and just as Jawahir Singh, the museum's carpenter, knew him. However, strangers who came from far-off places to visit the museum did not know Kim. Every person, rich or poor, was allowed entry into the museum and could also request further information about the wonders housed within from the curator there.


عجائب گھر لاہور
LAHORE MUSEUM
عجائب گھر لاہور

Climbing onto the large wheel of the cannon, Abdullah said, "Let me come up too." To which Kim teased him playfully, saying, "Your father used to make pastries, and your mother used to steal ghee! This cannon was taken from the Muslims long ago."

Chota Lal, who was wearing fine and expensive clothes, also tried to climb up. Although his father was a very wealthy man, in India, rich and poor children could play together.

Kim did not allow him to come up either, saying, "It was taken from the Hindus as well. The Muslims took it from them." Then he teased him, saying, "Your father was a pastry-maker too!"

KIM'S BATTLE: RIVALS PUSHED FROM THE ZAMZAMA

However, as Kim saw a man coming from the direction of Moti Bazaar, he cut his sentence short. Kim, who was familiar with people of every caste and race, had never seen such a person before. He was very tall, nearly six feet high, and dressed in clothes that left Kim unable to guess what his occupation might be—though the items on his body suggested he was a religious man. He resembled the Chinese cobbler in the bazaar.

Kim said to his friends, "Look, look! Who is this man?"

Abdullah put a finger in his mouth in astonishment and said, "He looks like a human."

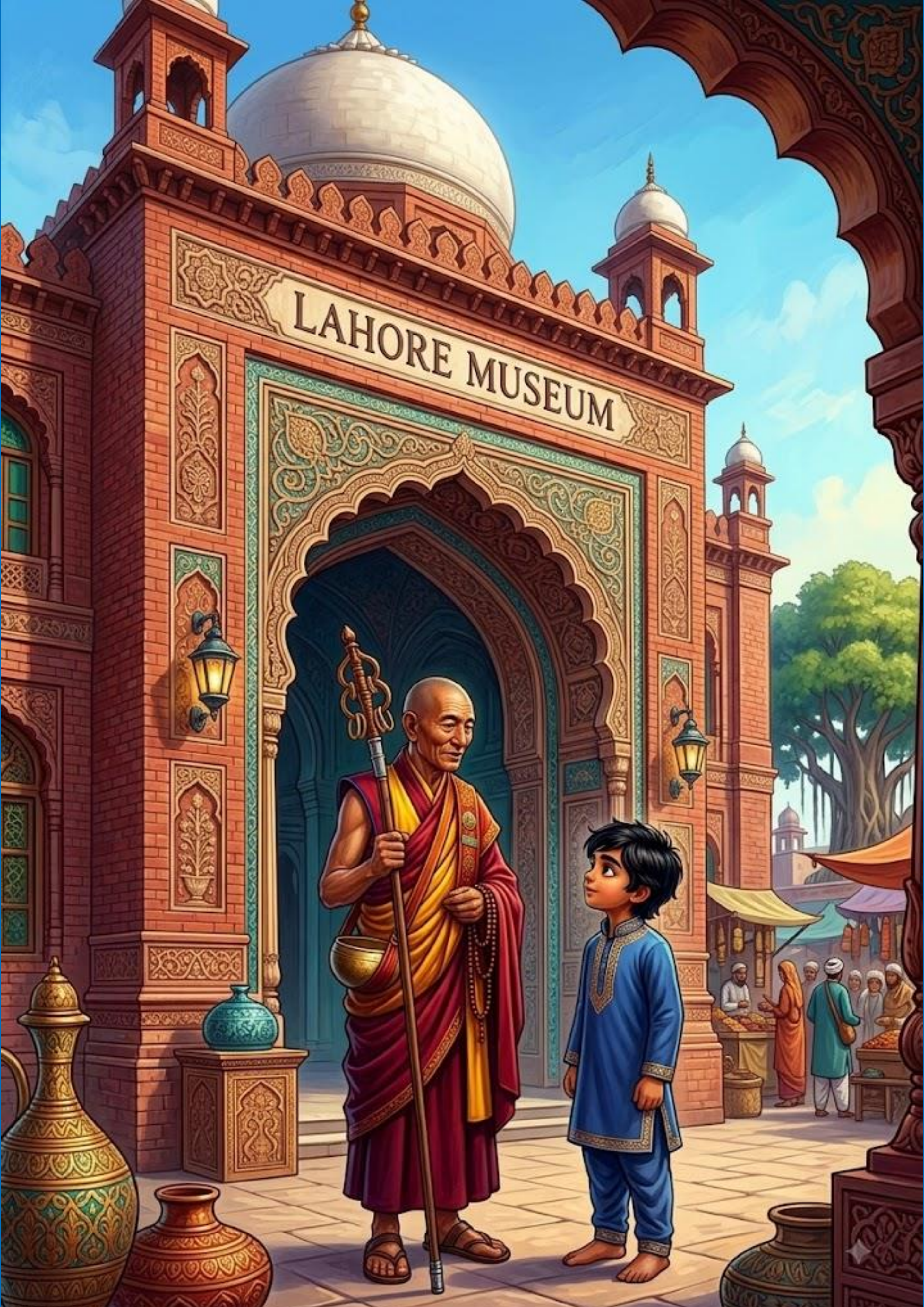
Kim replied, "Yes, yes, he is certainly a human, but he doesn't seem to be from India. I have never seen such a person before."

Chota Lal said, "Look, he is going inside the museum."

The policeman said to the man in Punjabi, "I cannot understand what you are saying," and then said to Kim, "Little Friend of all the World, ask him what he wants to say."

Jumping down from the cannon, Kim said, "Alright, send him to me. He has come from another country, and you are just like a buffalo."

In his helpless state, the man came over to the boys. The items on his body indicated that he had come from a mountainous region.


LAHORE MUSEUM

Speaking in very good Urdu, he asked, "Children, what is this large building?"

Kim, who was accustomed to addressing adults with respectful titles like *Lala Mian*, replied without giving the man any title, "This is the *Ajaib Ghar* (Museum)."

He asked, "Can one go inside?"

"Yes, it is written outside that everyone is allowed entry."

"Is one allowed to enter without money?"

Kim replied, "I am not wealthy at all, yet I go inside all the time."

The man said, "I am an old man and I was not aware of this."

Kim asked him, "What is your caste? Where is your home? Have you come from very far away?"

neighboring mountains

The man replied, "Yes, I have come from very far away, from a mountainous region where the air is clean and the water is cold."

Because the Chinese cobbler in the bazaar had once scolded Abdullah for spitting on the shoes, Abdullah said, "He is Chinese."

Chota Lal said, "He is a hillman," to which the man replied, "I am not a hillman. I belong to Tibet. I am actually a Lama, which in your language is called a *Guru*."

Kim said, "So you are a Guru who has come from Tibet. I have seen a person like you for the first time in my life. Are there Hindus there as well?"

The man answered, "We are followers of the Middle Way, who live in peace. Before my death, I set out to visit four holy sites." He looked at the boys affectionately and said, "I am an old man and you are very young—could your knowledge ever equal mine?"

Kim asked him, "Have you eaten any food?"

He showed his begging bowl (*kashkol*), which all the boys recognized, and said, "I am not hungry yet." He then asked, "Are there also pictures and statues of the Holy One inside this museum in Lahore?"

Abdullah said, "Yes, it is true—there are many statues inside for idolaters and infidels like you."

Kim responded, "Do not mind his words. This museum belongs to the government. Come with me, I will show you around inside."

The Hindu boy, Chota Lal, said in a low voice, "Be careful, strangers kidnap children."

And the Muslim boy, Abdullah, said, "He is both a stranger and an idolater."

At this, Kim laughed and said, "He is new to this region. You two should go back to your mothers' laps—that is the only safe place for you."

The man began following Kim, and upon seeing the grand statues of the Buddha, he stood there in awe and wonder. These statues were present in vast numbers, forming the glory of the museum. With amazement and reverence, the Lama gazed at every single statue and painting, which included representations of the Buddha as well as his close disciples. As he looked at them, holy chants naturally flowed from his lips. "What a glorious day this is! The beginning of my sacred pilgrimage has turned out so well."

Kim introduced him to the museum's English curator. The two exchanged greetings. The museum's curator welcomed the Lama and took him into his office. The old Lama was trembling as if he had discovered a treasure. He remained there for a long time, conversing with the curator.

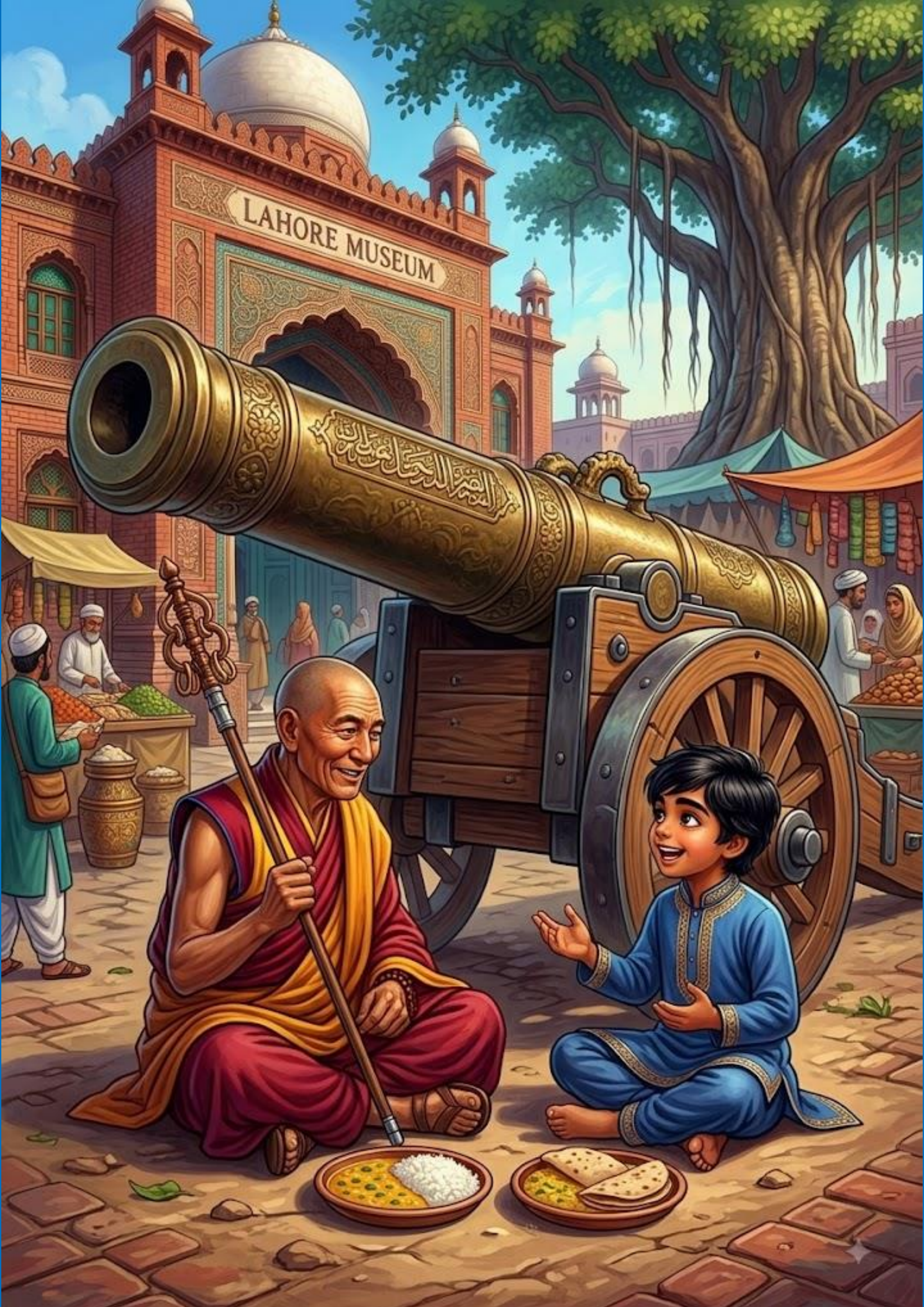
After the Lama returned from the museum, Kim made him rest near the cannon, despite the soldier's objections. Kim then brought back good food by begging from nearby houses, which the Lama ate. Once the Lama fell asleep, Kim slipped away and changed his attire. He had now transformed himself completely to look like a Hindu boy.

Upon waking, the Lama did not see his disciple and appeared deeply distressed. He said, "My new disciple had come to help me. He showed me the way, showed me the museum, and brought me food when I was hungry. With his help, I was also meant to search for the Holy River, but I do not know where he has gone."

Kim asked the Lama, "What country or region was your disciple from? Was he a Muslim, Hindu, Sikh, or Jain? Was he from a high caste or a low caste?"

The Lama replied, "We follow the Middle Way—no one is inferior or superior."

Kim relieved the Lama's anxiety and said, "I am your disciple. You are a very good man, and I will now go with you to Benares so we can search for the Holy River together. In truth, I too am in search of something—a Red Bull on a green field, where I will be helped. Perhaps both of us will succeed in our quests."

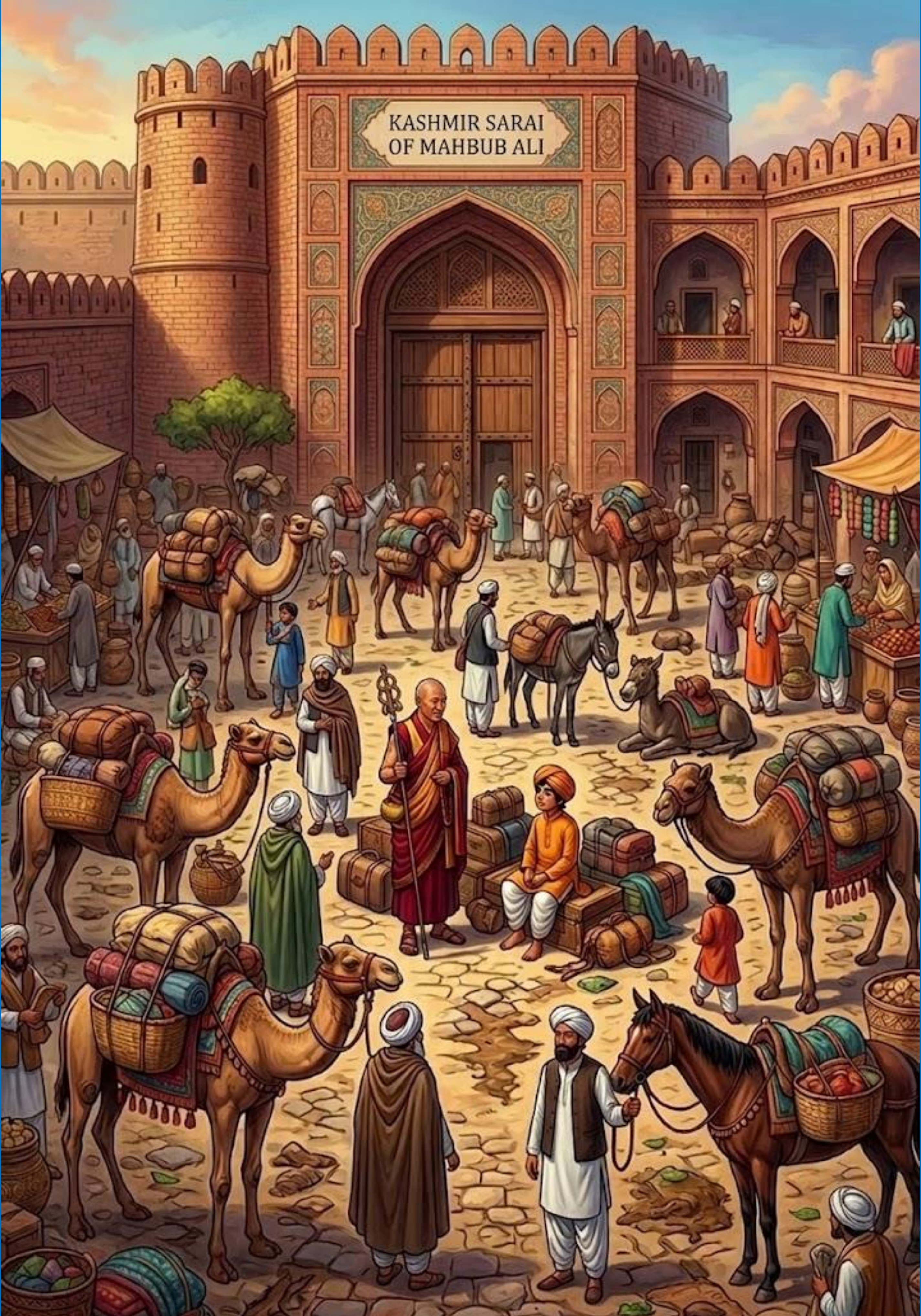

LAHORE MUSEUM

When the Lama expressed his desire to leave for Benares immediately, Kim cautioned him that thieves and other hazards lurked at night, proposing that they begin their journey the following morning instead. When the Lama asked where they would spend the night, Kim suggested the Kashmir Serai—a vast, open shelter situated near the railway station.

Caravans of horses and camels traveling from distant Central Asian countries, such as Tajikistan and Afghanistan, would stop to rest there. The serai was constantly crowded with travelers arriving in Lahore in large caravans from the northern mountains.

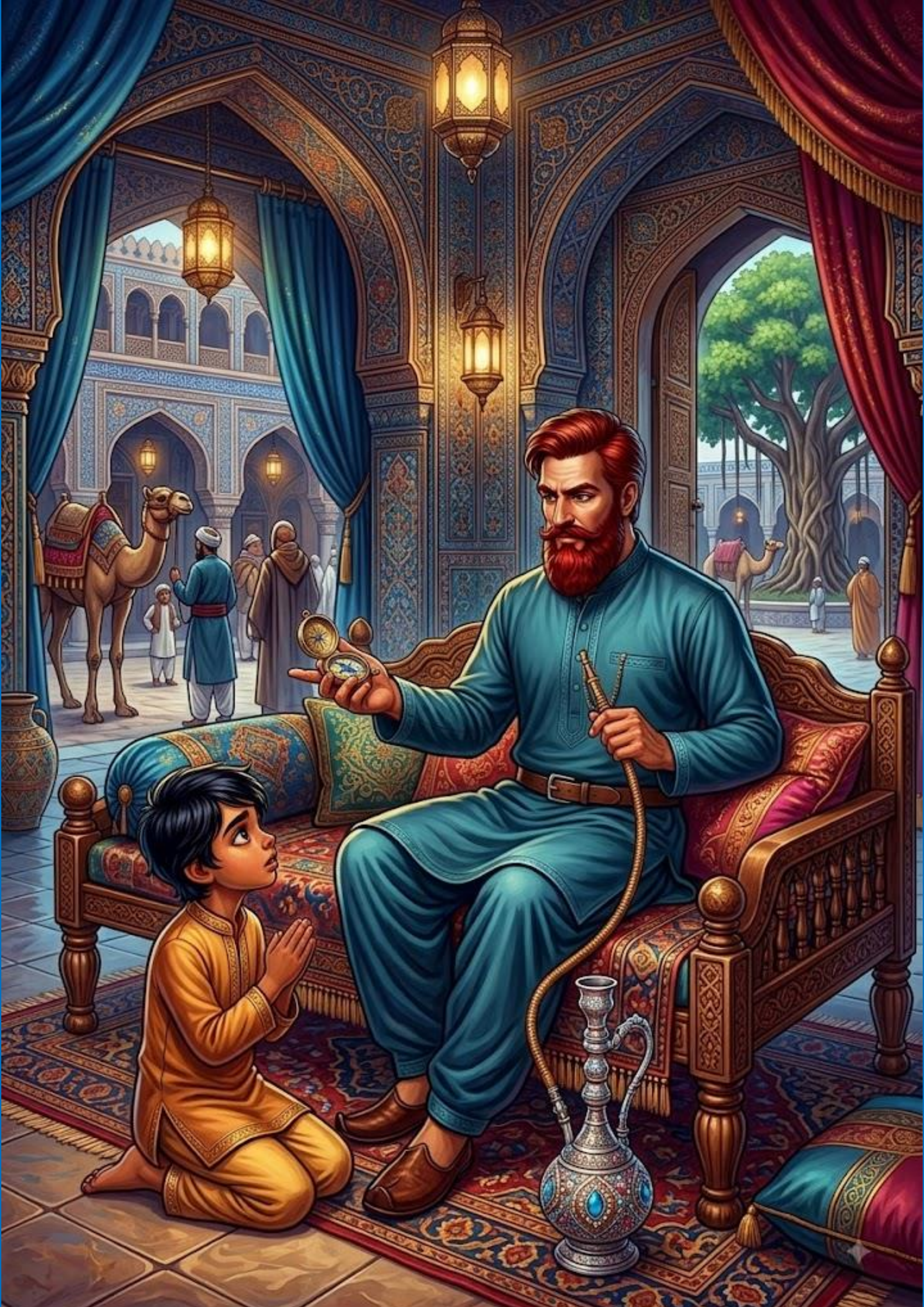
The Lama had never seen such a grand city or such vast crowds before. The bazaars were gleaming with lights, filled with people of every origin and race, making the whole scene feel like a dream to him. The senior Lama grew uneasy with the repeated screeching of brakes from the tram car, which was packed to capacity with passengers.

Near the railway station, the serai covered a massive area. Camels, mules, and horses belonging to the northern caravans were tied nearby. Some were being loaded with bundles of goods, while others were being unloaded.


KASHMIR SARAI
OF MAHBUB ALI

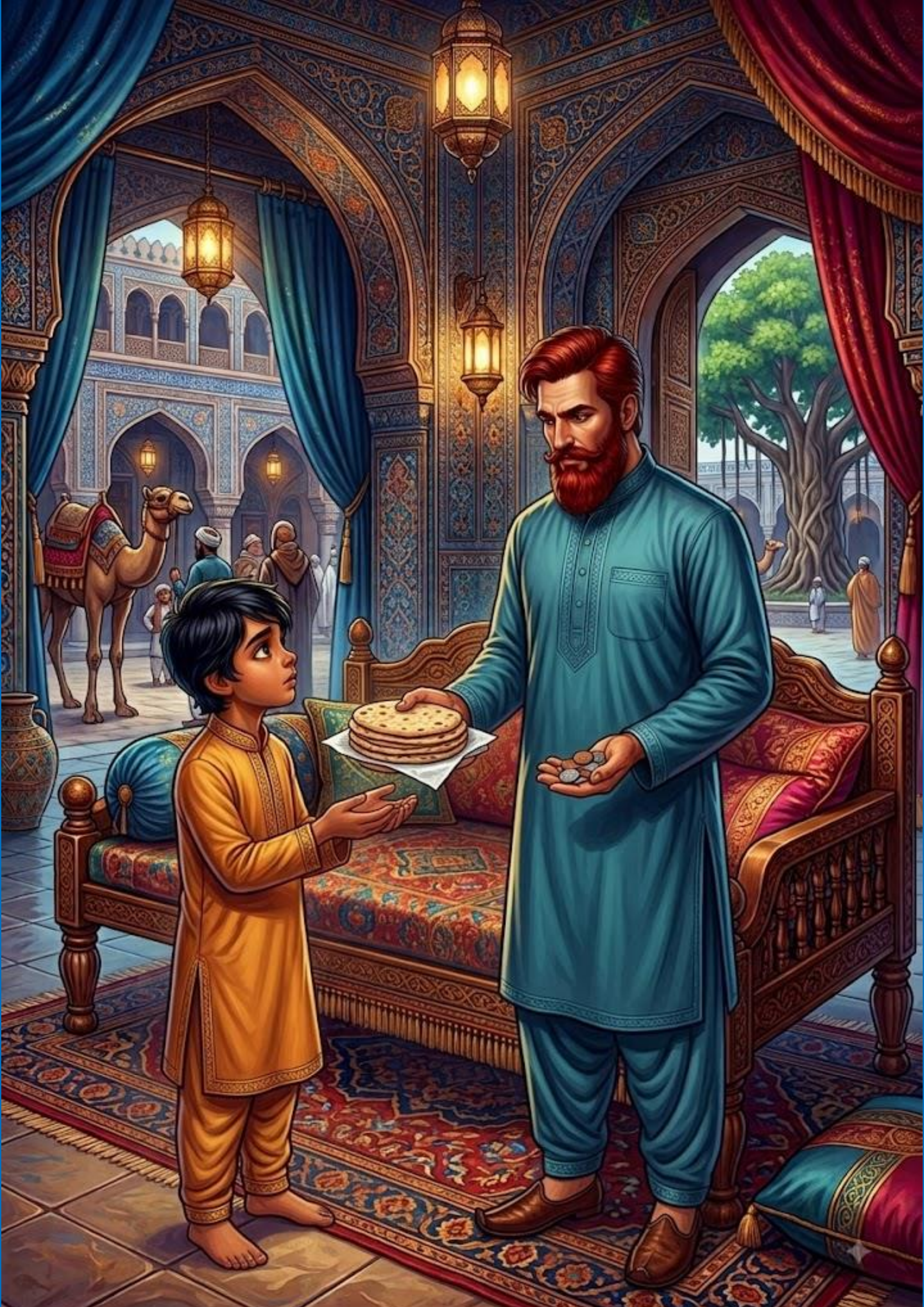
The serai owner, Mahbub Ali, was himself from Afghanistan and dyed his beard red to conceal his advancing age. He knew the value of Kim, who was now thirteen years old and had spent the last three years performing espionage and similar tasks for him. Mahbub Ali affectionately called Kim *Little Friend of all the World*—that is, a boy who was friends with the entire world.

Once, Mahbub Ali had asked Kim to shadow a man to see everything he did throughout the day and whom he met. Kim spied on the man all day, and that night Mahbub Ali listened to every single detail from Kim with great care and attention. Though Kim did not know the reason behind all this, Mahbub Ali would reward him with delicious meals and occasionally give him money for completing such tasks.



Mahbub Ali was in his caravanserai, smoking a hookah on a comfortable bed. Kim did not appear before him directly and pushed the Lama forward instead. Seeing him, Mahbub Ali said in surprise, "By Allah, what is this! A Lama living in the far-off mountains, here in Lahore? Old man, how did you come to be here?" Upon this, the Lama held out his begging bowl toward him. Mahbub Ali said, "Go to my servants; there must be one among them who shares your faith, and he will surely take care of you and give you food as well." Now Kim came up to Mahbub Ali. Seeing him dressed as a Hindu boy, Mahbub Ali said, "There are Hindus among my servants too. Go to them; they will give you food." Kim spoke in his natural voice, revealing that he was Kim and that he was traveling to Benares as the old Lama's disciple. Mahbub Ali said, "Kim, you have never lied to me." He called the Lama over, questioned him, and Kim’s truthfulness was proven. Mahbub Ali remained lost in thought for a while, then said in a very soft voice, "You are going to Benares, and Umballa lies along the way. You must deliver a message from me to a British officer. It is actually regarding a white horse. Last year, the British officer expressed a desire to buy it." Mahbub Ali described the British officer’s appearance and location to Kim, telling him to deliver the message that the pedigree of the white horse was now fully prepared. He added, "That officer will ask for proof that I truly sent you, so tell him that Mahbub Ali has also sent proof, which I shall give you."

Just then, a shadow passed close to them, whereupon Mahbub Ali immediately changed the subject and said aloud, "By Allah! You are not the only orphan in the world whose parents have died. There are many other beggars like you." Then, handing something to Kim, he said, "Go lie down with the other servant boys. Tomorrow I will give you employment." Wrapped inside the bread Mahbub Ali had handed Kim was a piece of tissue paper and three silver coins, which were his reward. Kim placed these items inside the amulet-like pouch hanging around his neck. Kim did not believe the story told about the horses, but he also did not know that the matter was extremely serious, and that besides his magnificent horse trade, Mahbub Ali spied for the British government. Although he traded in horses, during his travels through remote mountain regions, he would assess the situation and report to the government, which the British government then acted upon. In the secret documents of the Indian Survey Department, he was registered under the code name C.25.

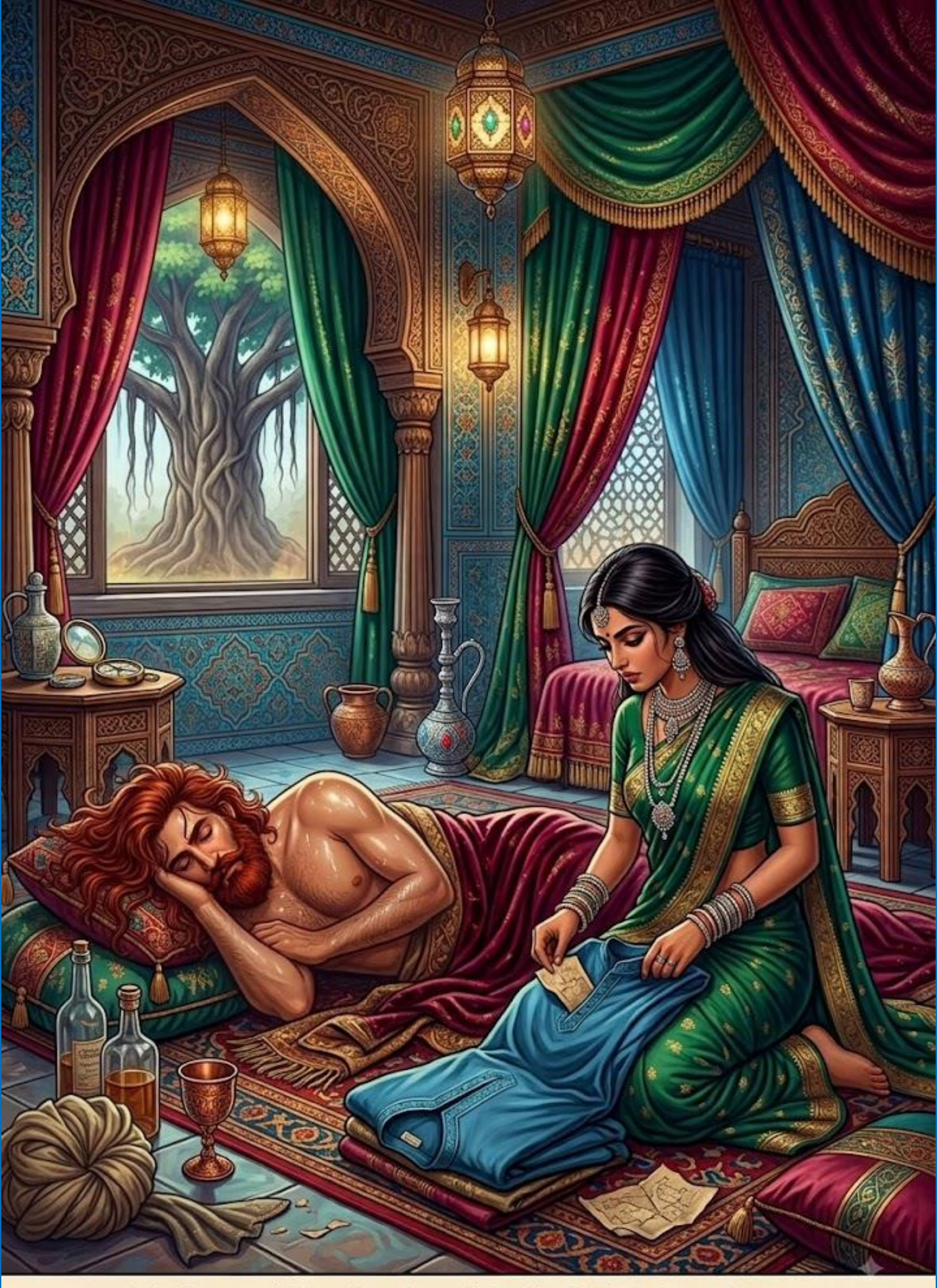


A few days earlier during his travels through the mountainous region, Mahbub Ali's caravan had been attacked. He suspected that this was orchestrated by five rulers who were opposed to the British government and who suspected that Mahbub Ali's caravans were spying on them and passing information to the British government in India.

Now Mahbub Ali possessed a critical piece of news that he wanted to convey to the authorities without wasting a single hour. This news was encoded through fine pinpricks on the tissue paper, revealing that the five kings were against the government, aided by a Hindu bank in Peshawar, a Muslim ruler in the south, and a Belgian arms company.

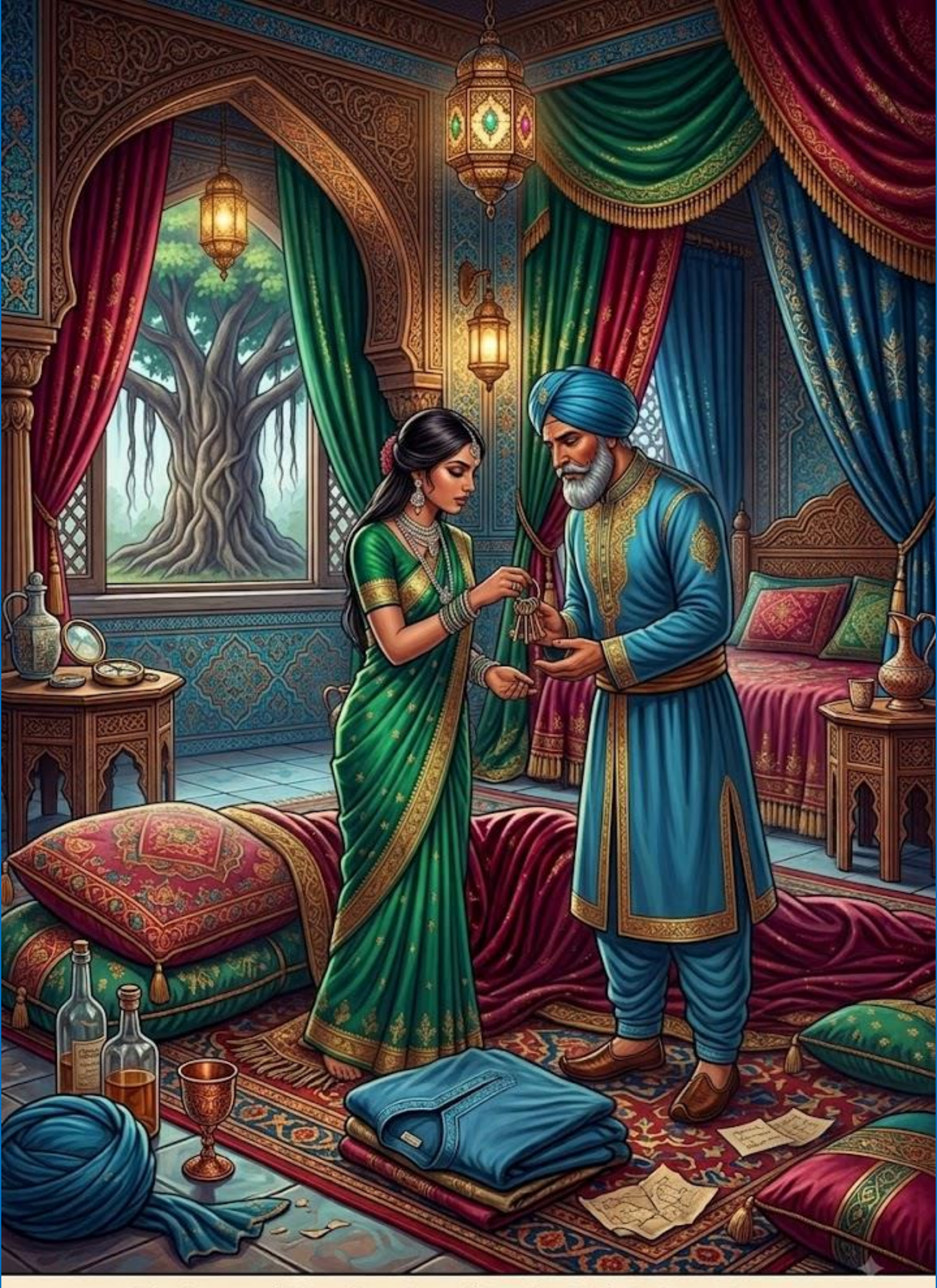
Because Mahbub Ali's enemies were watching him closely, he could not personally carry this crucial information to the British officer in Umballa. When Kim came to him, he decided to carry out this task through him, as no one would ever suspect a mountain Lama and a poor beggar boy.

After properly fulfilling his responsibility, Mahbub Ali went to the courtesans' quarter to meet a beautiful woman who had been introduced to him by a Kashmiri Pandit. Although it was forbidden in his religion, the woman plied him heavily with wine. He kept rambling in his intoxication, and after drugging him, the woman searched him.



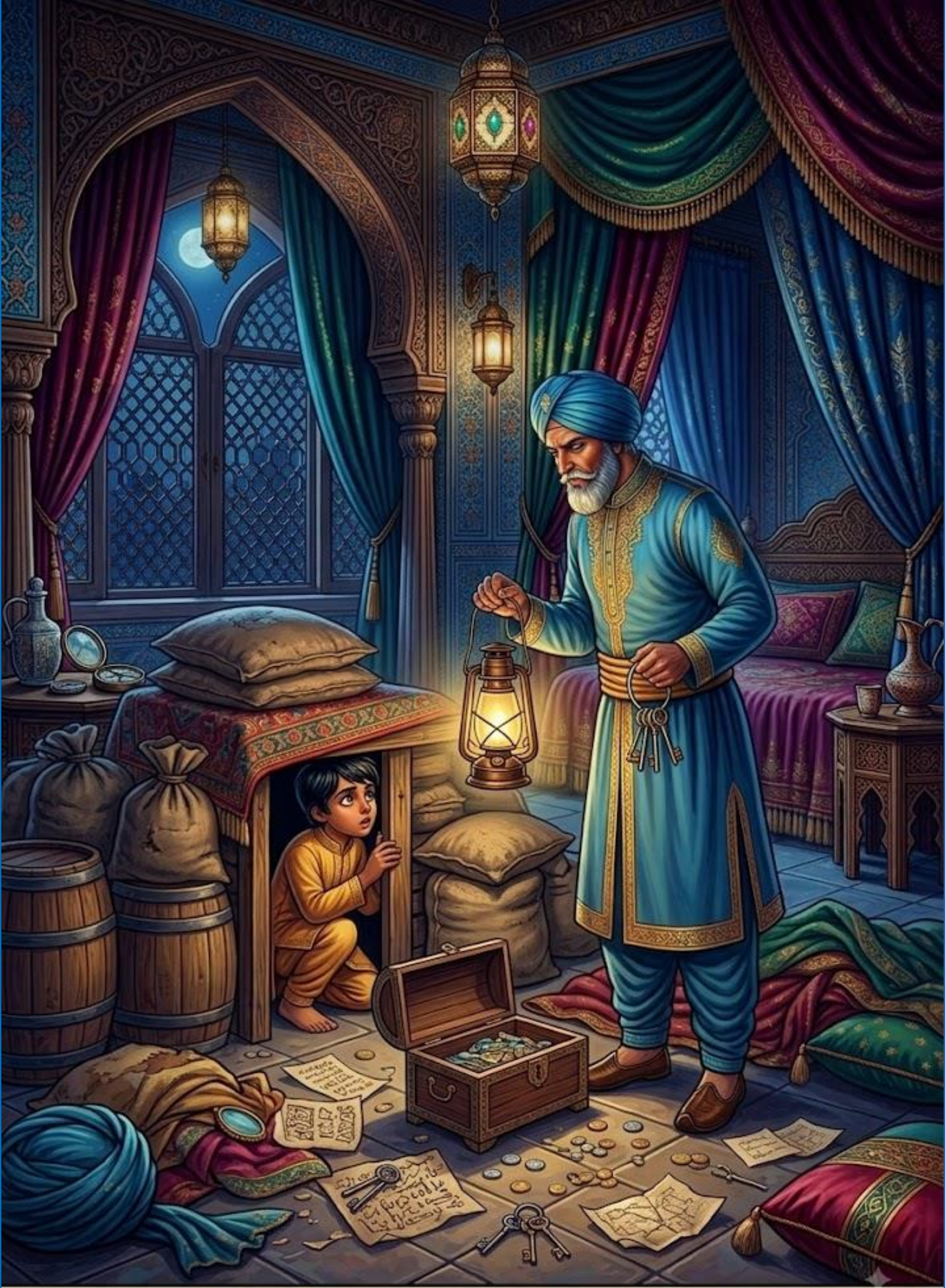
The Story of Kim Continued. In the Rich Lahore Room...

And, taking the keys from Mahbub Ali's belt, she handed them over to a man from Delhi who was present there.



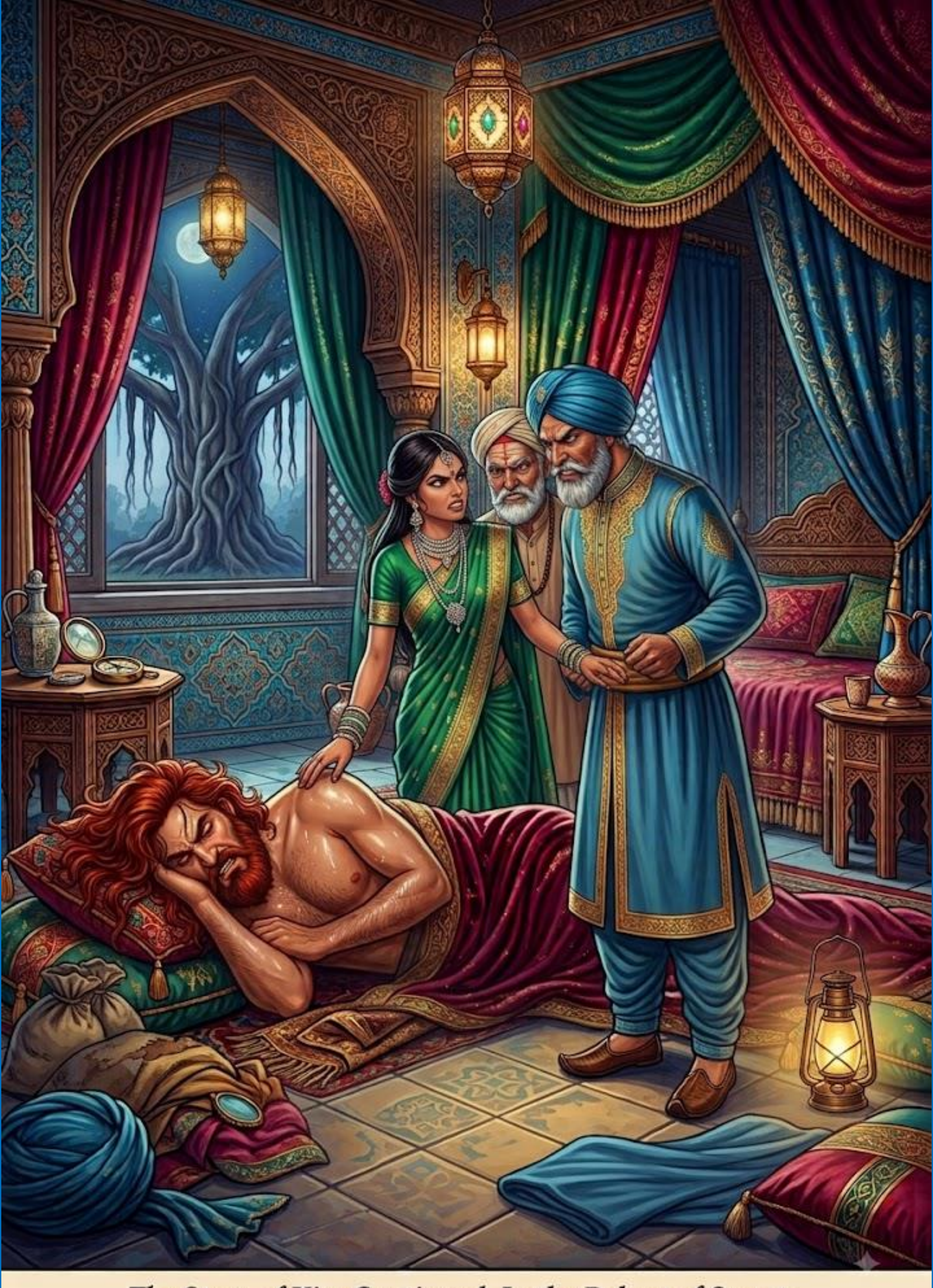
The Story of Kim Continued. In the Rich Lahore Room...

A short while later, Kim saw that very same man inside Mahbub Ali's empty room, holding the keys. He searched through every single item. He even examined Mahbub Ali's shoes, which made Kim realize that this was no ordinary thief, but someone looking for a specific thing. At first, Kim thought of raising a cry of "Thief! Thief!" to shatter the silence and awaken the entire caravanserai. But then his mind said, "No. Keep quiet." Kim understood that what the man was searching for was actually safely with him, and he continued watching everything through a hole. He grasped the gravity of the situation, and in the pitch darkness of the night, he woke the Lama and said that they must begin their journey toward Benares immediately.



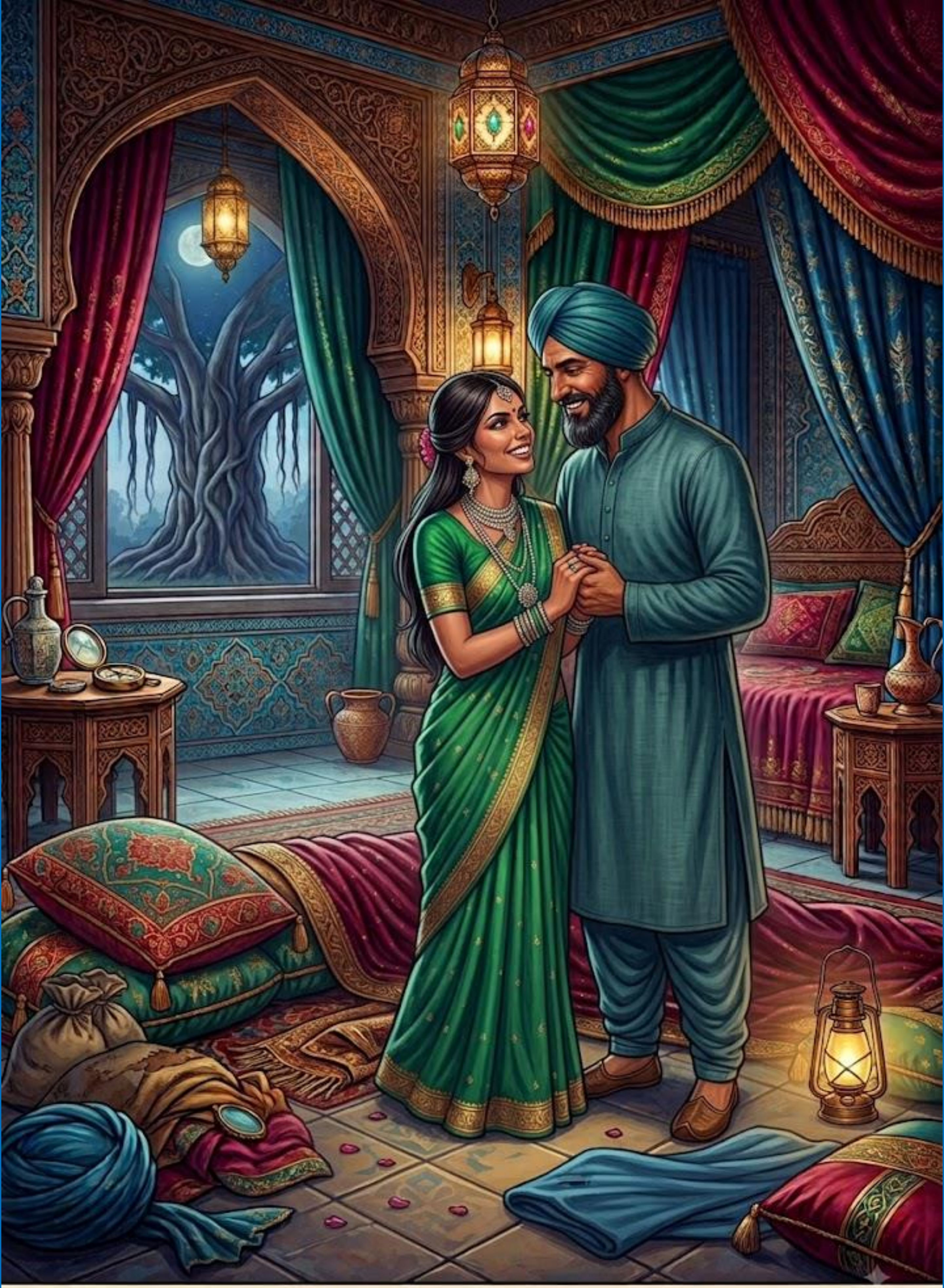
The Story of Kim Continued. Night in the Sarai.

Later, the beautiful woman and the Kashmiri Pandit were conversing. Resting her elbow on Mahbub Ali, who was snoring unconscious, the beautiful woman remarked that this shameless Afghan horse trader sees nothing beyond horses and women. When the man from Delhi reported that nothing was found in Mahbub Ali's room, the Kashmiri Pandit thoughtfully noted that the contact had mentioned a horse trader, without specifying any name. The beautiful woman replied that as many horse traders pass through there as there are fleas in an old coat—Sikandar Khan, Nur Ali Beg, Farrukh Shah—caravans belong to all of them. The Kashmiri Pandit instructed her to keep an eye on their caravans as well when they arrive. Pushing Mahbub Ali's head aside with disgust, the beautiful woman said, "My business is to make money. Farrukh Shah is a total bear, Ali Beg is a careless fool, and damn old Sikandar Khan! Anyway, I should sleep now, because this shameless brute won't wake before morning."



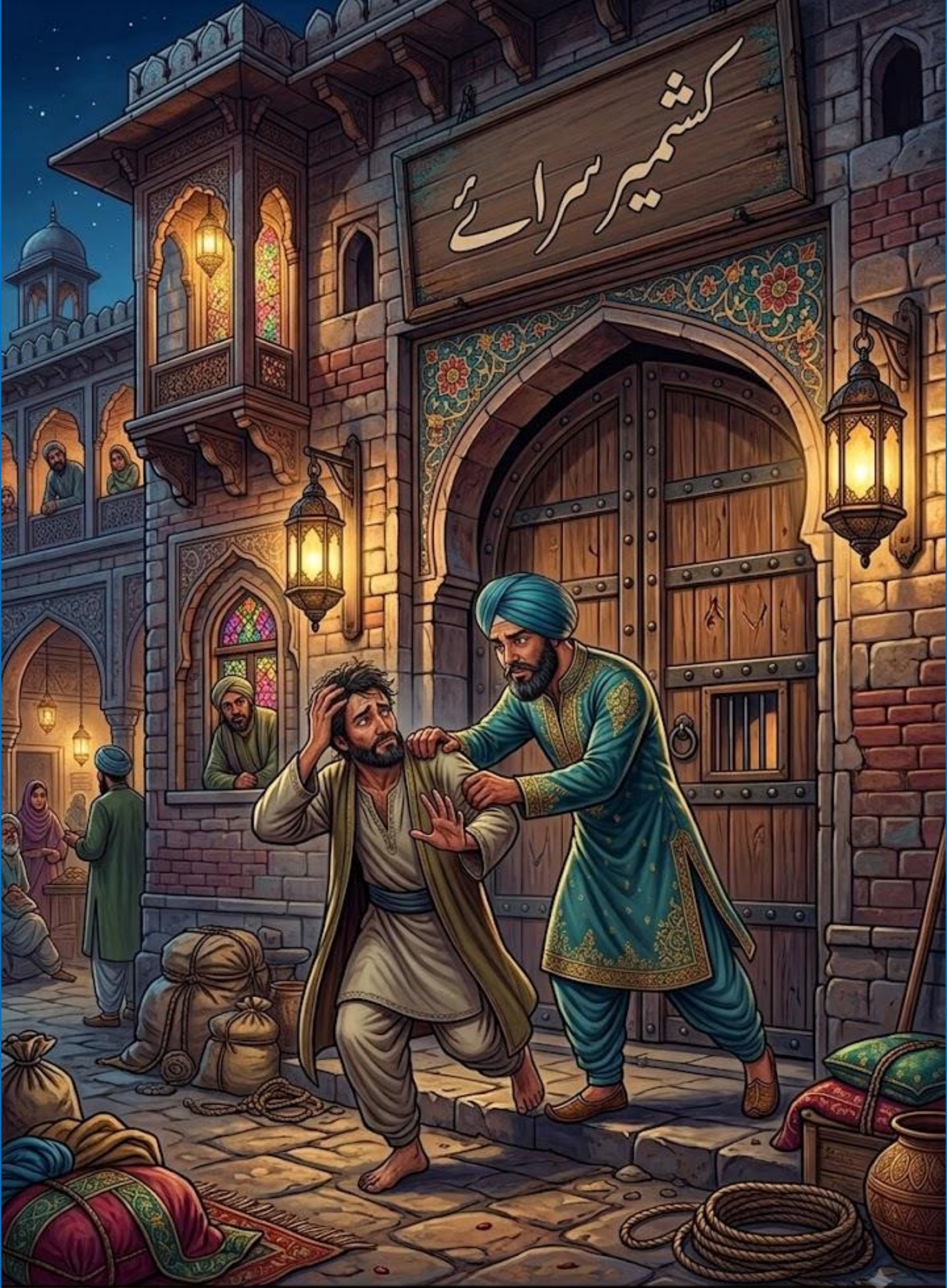
The Story of Kim Continued. In the Palace of Secrets.

When Mahbub Ali woke up in the morning, the beautiful woman innocently said, "Do you have any idea how evil a thing alcohol is? God forbid! By touching it, you have committed a sin."



The Story of Kim Continued. In the Palace of Secrets.

Mahbub Ali set off toward the Kashmir serai under the starlight. Finding no sign of Kim and the Lama, he woke up a man and inquired about them. The man replied that the crazy old man had gotten up in the middle of the night, claiming he was going to Benares, and the boy had led him away. Stroking his beard, Mahbub Ali muttered to himself, "God's curse upon all infidels," and went to his room.

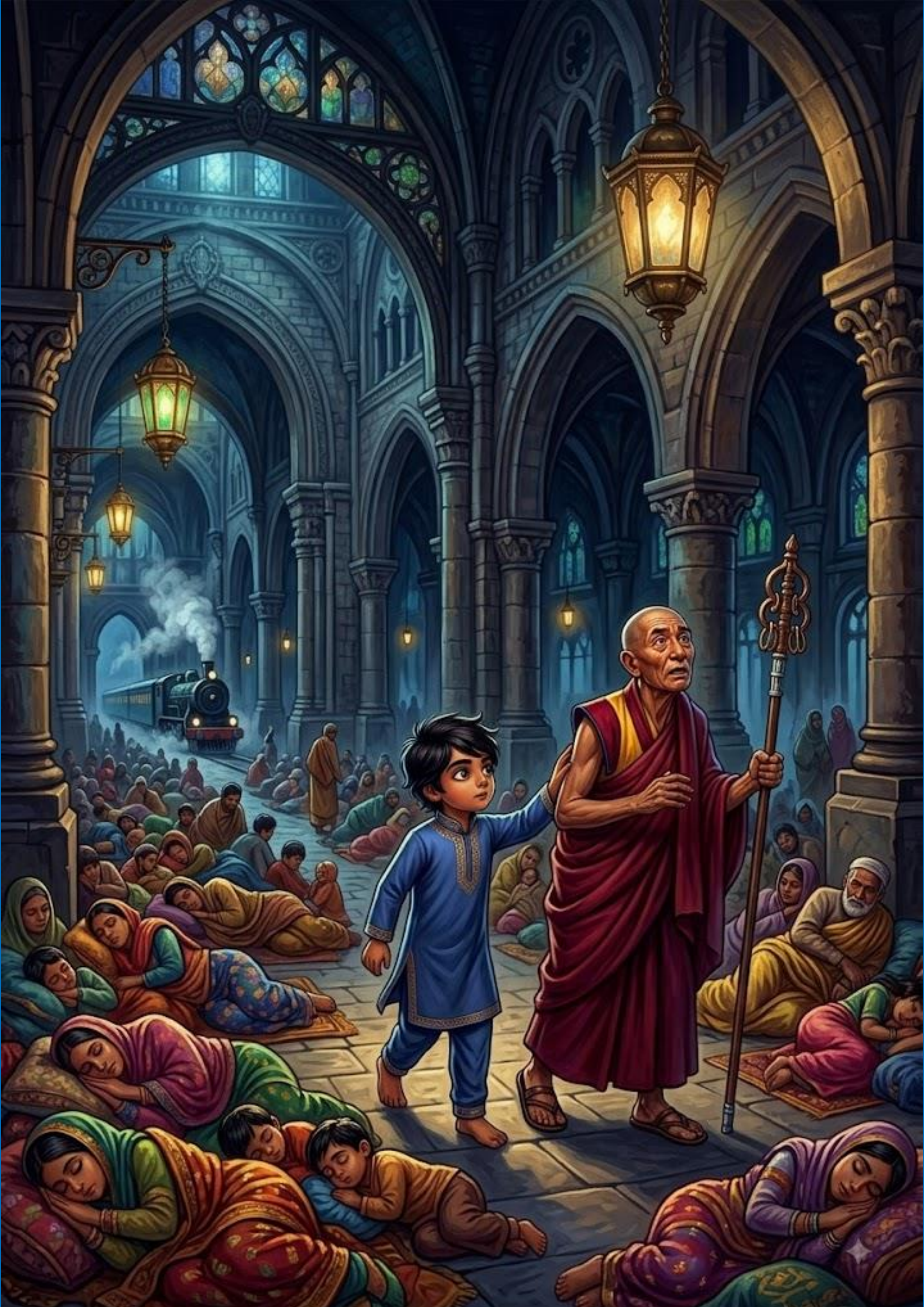

کشمیر سرائے

The Story of Kim Continued. In the Palace of Secrets.

Kim and the Lama arrived at the railway station, which loomed like a fortress in the darkness of the night. Seeing it, the Lama grew frightened and remarked that it looked like something built by a devil. Third-class passengers at the railway station lay scattered all over, waiting for the train. When Kim mentioned that they would now buy tickets for Umballa, the Lama insisted that they were supposed to go to Benares. Kim reassured him. When the train arrived late at night, the sleeping passengers awoke, and chaos broke out everywhere. The Lama handed Kim a large sum of money for the tickets, and his innocence and honesty deeply moved Kim.

When Kim asked for a ticket to Umballa, the ticket clerk, mumbling in his sleep, tossed him a ticket that was only for the next station, six miles away. Kim told him, "You can fool people coming from the villages, but I am a resident of Lahore city. Babu Ji, give me the correct ticket to Umballa." When the clerk handed over the correct ticket, Kim asked for another ticket to Amritsar. In truth, to save money for himself, he intended to buy a ticket for a shorter distance while traveling much farther.

After purchasing the tickets, he returned the remaining money to the Lama, though he did not forget to keep a small commission for himself.



Seeing the crowded third-class train compartment, the Lama grew anxious once again and asked, "Can we not travel on foot?" A burly Sikh, leaning forward with his bearded face, said, "Are you afraid? Yes, I too was scared when I traveled for the first time. Come inside. The government built this so that we could travel with ease." Kim asked a passenger, "Is there space here for two people?" A woman replied, "There is no room for a mouse, let alone a human." However, her husband said, "Mother of my sons, we must make room, for there is a holy Lama with him." Listening to her husband, the wife continued to grumble in anger.

A Hindu moneylender, carrying a ledger under his arm, chimed in, "Yes, yes, come inside. It is our duty to take care of the poor." When a young Dogra soldier going on leave mocked the moneylender's interest-based business, everyone burst into laughter.

A girl from Amritsar exclaimed in surprise, "Look, look! They are traveling on a train for the very first time!"

A farmer passenger used his strong hands to help the Lama get inside.

"However, sitting on a bench goes against our teachings, and it also causes me discomfort, so I will sit on the floor," the Lama said.

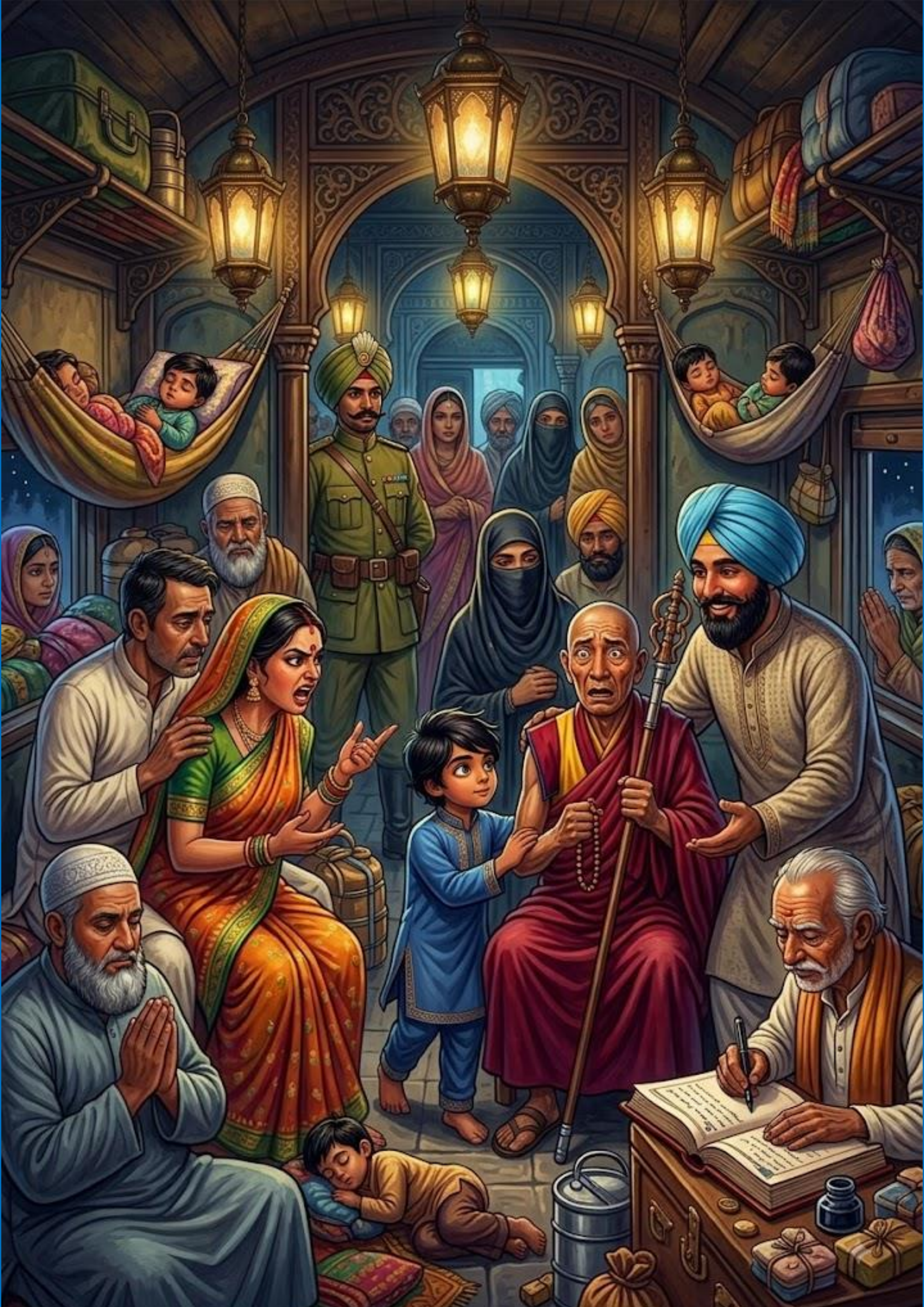
The Hindu moneylender remarked, "The train has its own rules. For instance, people of every religion and caste sit together."

As the girl from Amritsar was busy exchanging silent glances with the young soldier, the woman present there said angrily, "Extremely shameless people are also present here."

Kim praised a woman's generosity and managed to get some food from her.

The young soldier suggested that the old Lama should show some marvels to pass the time, to which Kim replied with slight anger, "Babaji is a great man of spiritual knowledge and contemplates matters far beyond your comprehension." The soldier responded, "Surely that must be so. We are warrior folk of the Ludhiana Sikh Regiment; we do not burden our minds too much."

A discussion began about Sikhs and Dogras being different, to which the girl from Amritsar remarked, "They all look the same to me."



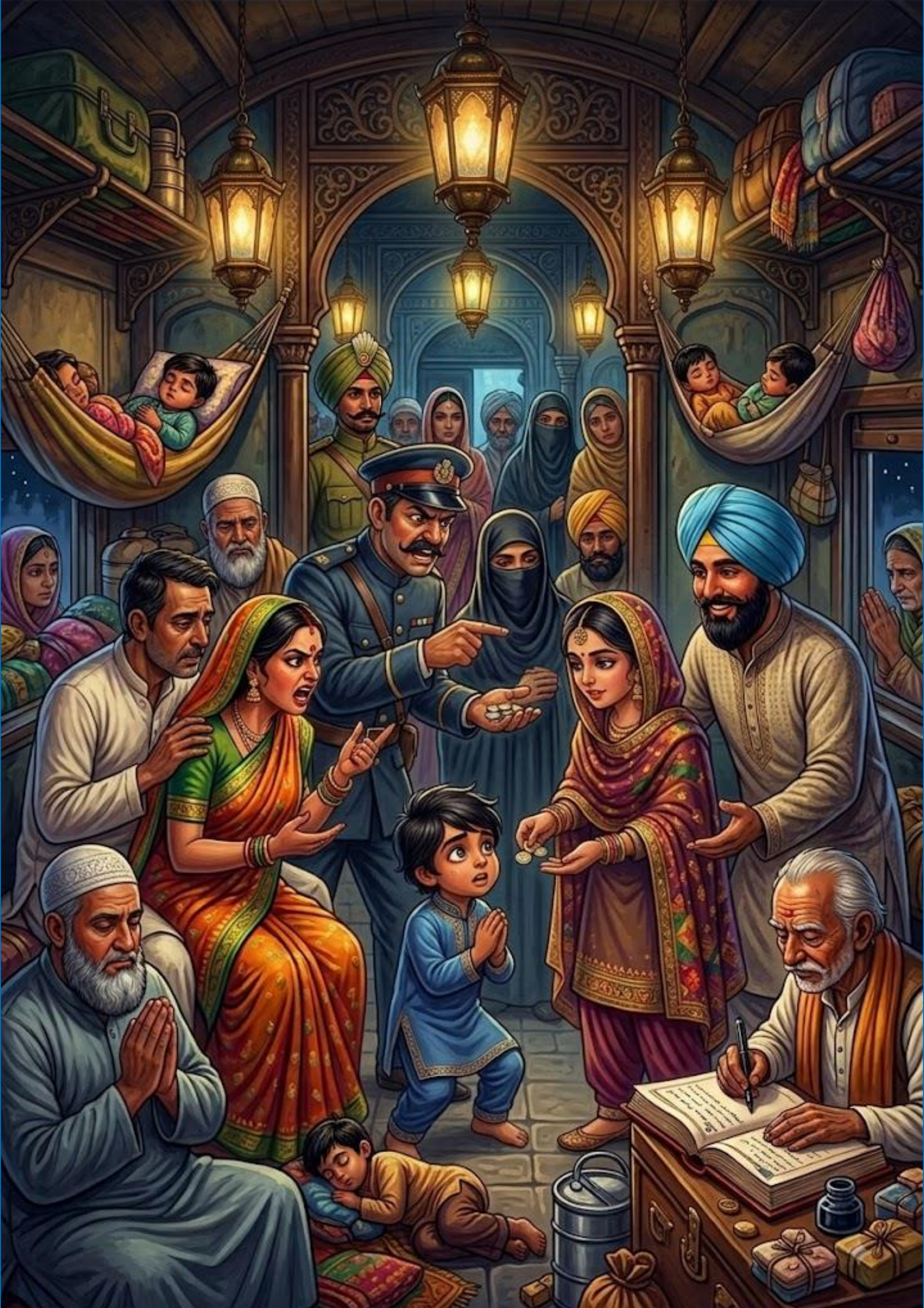
The ticket examiner arrived and began checking tickets. He knew the work had to be done very slowly, as people in India hid their tickets in the strangest places. After checking Kim's ticket, the examiner told him to get off the train. Kim pleaded, saying that he had to go to Umballa with his revered Lama because he was his disciple. The reply came, "You can go to hell for all I care, but get off this train." Crying, Kim said, "This Lama is my mother and my father. Without me, he will die." All the passengers spoke up in favor of Kim and the Lama, but when the ticket examiner still made him step down, Kim began acting and weeping, calling out to all the passengers, "I am poor, my mother is dead, my father is dead, take pity on me!"

Perplexed, the Lama asked, "What is going on here? He is my disciple and will travel with me. If it is a matter of money, I will pay." Kim whispered to him, "Keep quiet. Are we kings that we should spend our own money?" Spotting the girl from Amritsar outside, he turned his attention toward her, knowing that such girls were soft-hearted. When he addressed her as a generous-hearted girl, she laughed, gave Kim money for the ticket, and said, "Tell the Lama to pray for me."

Kim showered her with blessings, saying, "May blessings rain upon you ten thousand times! Holy Lama, look, a girl has shown us kindness and given me money for the ticket. Now I can travel with you." The Lama remarked, "She was certainly a deeply virtuous woman. How great a reward of good deeds she has earned!" However, as the girl departed, the farmer's wife sneered, "Showed off her charms and left! There must be at least ten thousand such 'virtuous' women in Amritsar."

The bank employee called out, "Babaji, come quickly, or the train will leave!"

After getting back onto the train, Kim said, "Holy Lama, the ticket has been arranged. Now these generous souls will surely feed us too."



As the morning sun scattered its golden rays, crops swayed across the magnificently fertile lands of Punjab outside the train window. Passengers opened their food wrappers and began eating breakfast. Afterward, the farmer, the bank employee, and the soldier began enjoying their tobacco, while the Sikh and the farmer’s wife started chewing betel leaf. The Lama was turning his rosary beads, while Kim felt deeply satisfied after a hearty breakfast.

The Lama asked everyone if anyone knew of the holy river he was searching for. Everyone had the same reply: the only holy river here is the Ganges.

The Lama spoke about his faith and Lord Buddha. He began speaking in Urdu, but soon got lost in his thoughts and shifted to his native tongue; nevertheless, everyone listened to him respectfully. In truth, those were good and polite people. They all knew that in India, people of different religions passionately speak about their teachings in various languages. They knew this had always been the case and would continue forever.

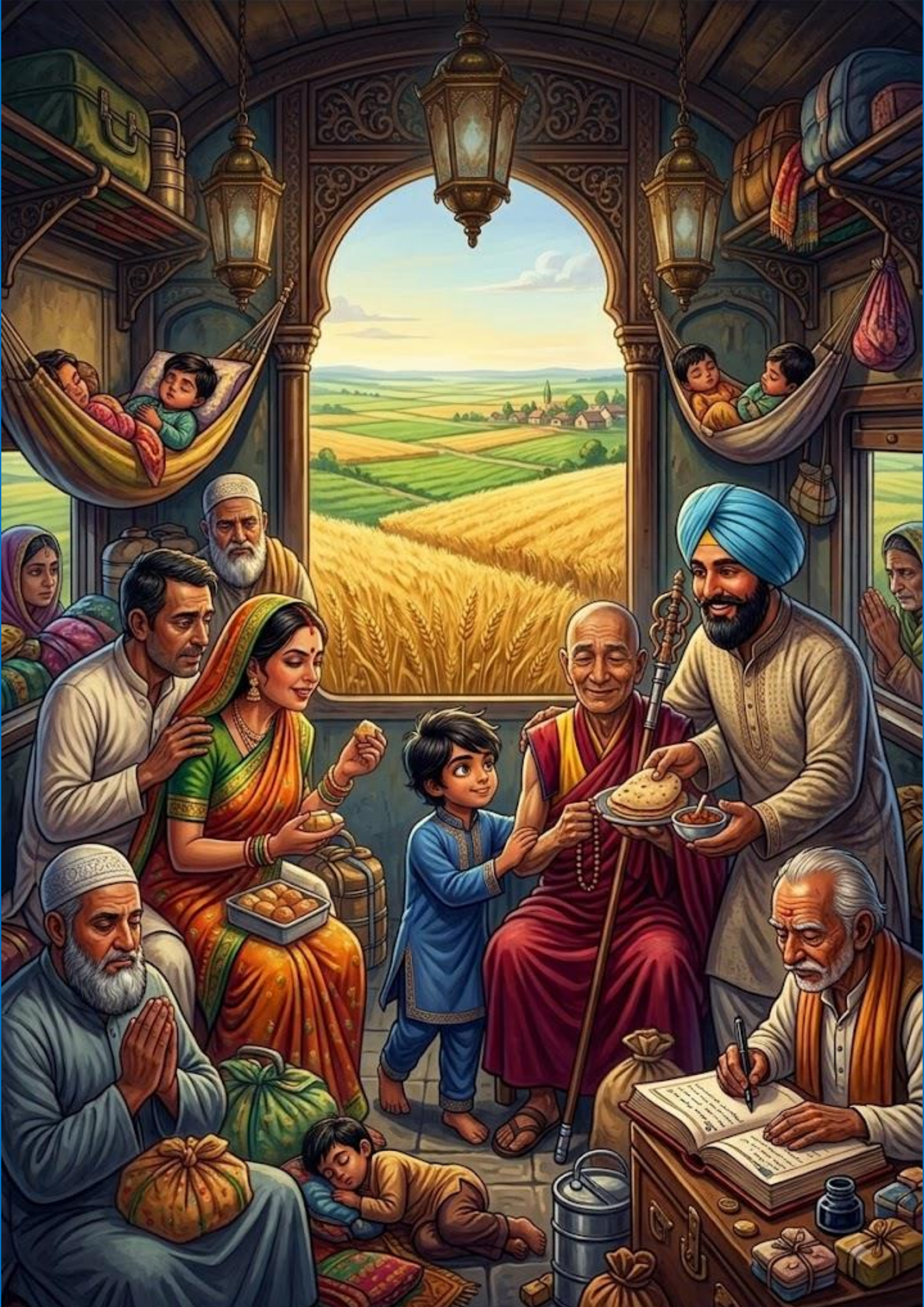
As soon as the Lama realized he was in a foreign land, he switched back to Urdu and said, "O people of Hind, I am traveling in search of the Holy River. When the sacred Buddha shot an arrow in an archery contest, his strength drove it far beyond the target, and from the spot where it landed, a holy river sprang forth. By bathing in it, one gains enlightenment and becomes cleansed of sins. If you know of it, tell me about this river." Voices were raised saying that sins could only be washed away by bathing in the Ganges.

The Sikh soldier from Ludhiana began relating, "Close to us, there was a Muslim regiment whose soldier Maulana would sometimes fall into strange states and begin making prophecies. But God protects such people too. I noticed that his officers also tolerated him in every possible way."

Looking at the lush green crops outside, the farmer's wife remarked, "Look at how much mercy our God has shown us," to which her husband replied, "Punjab is very vast, and it is extremely difficult to see every river here."

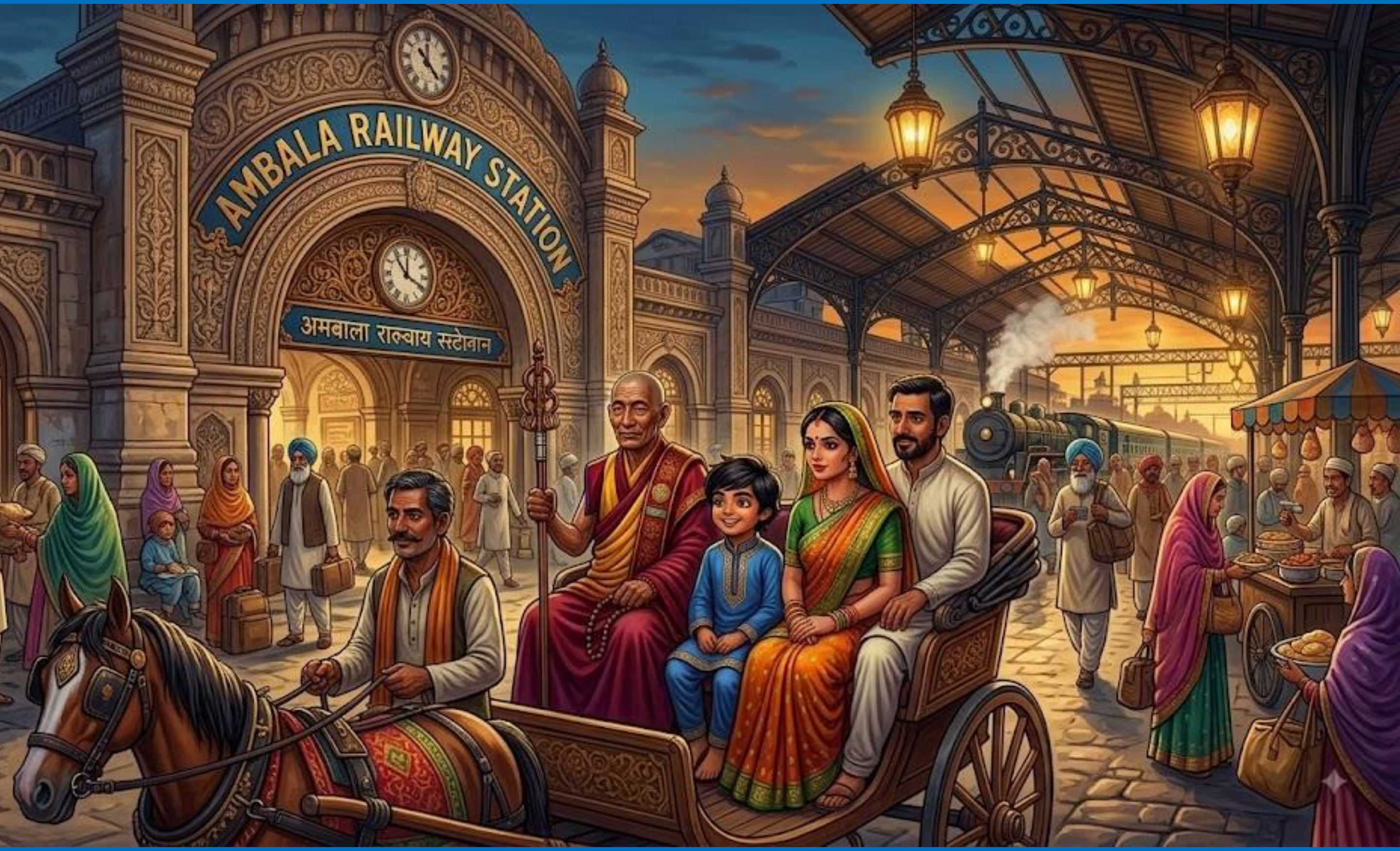
The Sikh said with absolute conviction, "The last great man who came here was Alexander the Great. He constructed splendid roads in Jalandhar. He also did works in Umballa that can still be seen today."

Seeing the Lama anxious, Kim spat his betel juice onto the ground and said, "Do not worry, we will surely find the Holy River." The Lama said, "The train's speed is very fast, and I feel as though we might have left our river behind." Kim replied, "Don't worry. You were saying that river is near Benares, and that region is still far ahead."



When they arrived in Umballa late at night, they were utterly exhausted.

A Hindu couple offered to let them spend the night at their home so they might receive their blessings.


AMBALA RAILWAY STATION
अमबाला राल्वाय स्टोवान

After leaving the Lama at their house, Kim made an excuse and set off to deliver the message to the British officer. Soon, reaching his residence, he said to the officer, "Mahbub Ali has sent a message."

"What is the message?" came the response.

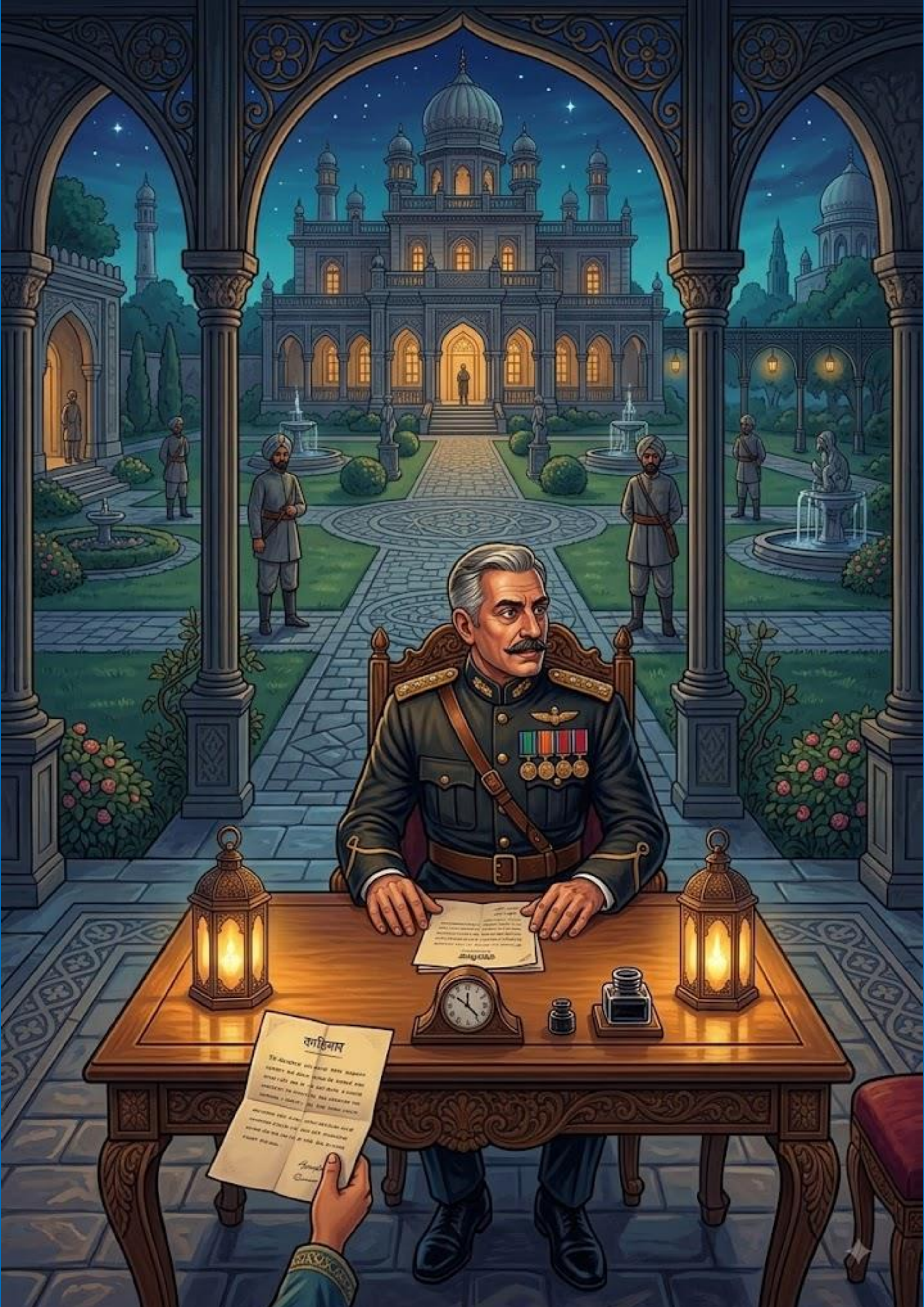
"The pedigree of the horse is fully prepared," Kim said.

The officer asked, "Alright, what is the proof?"

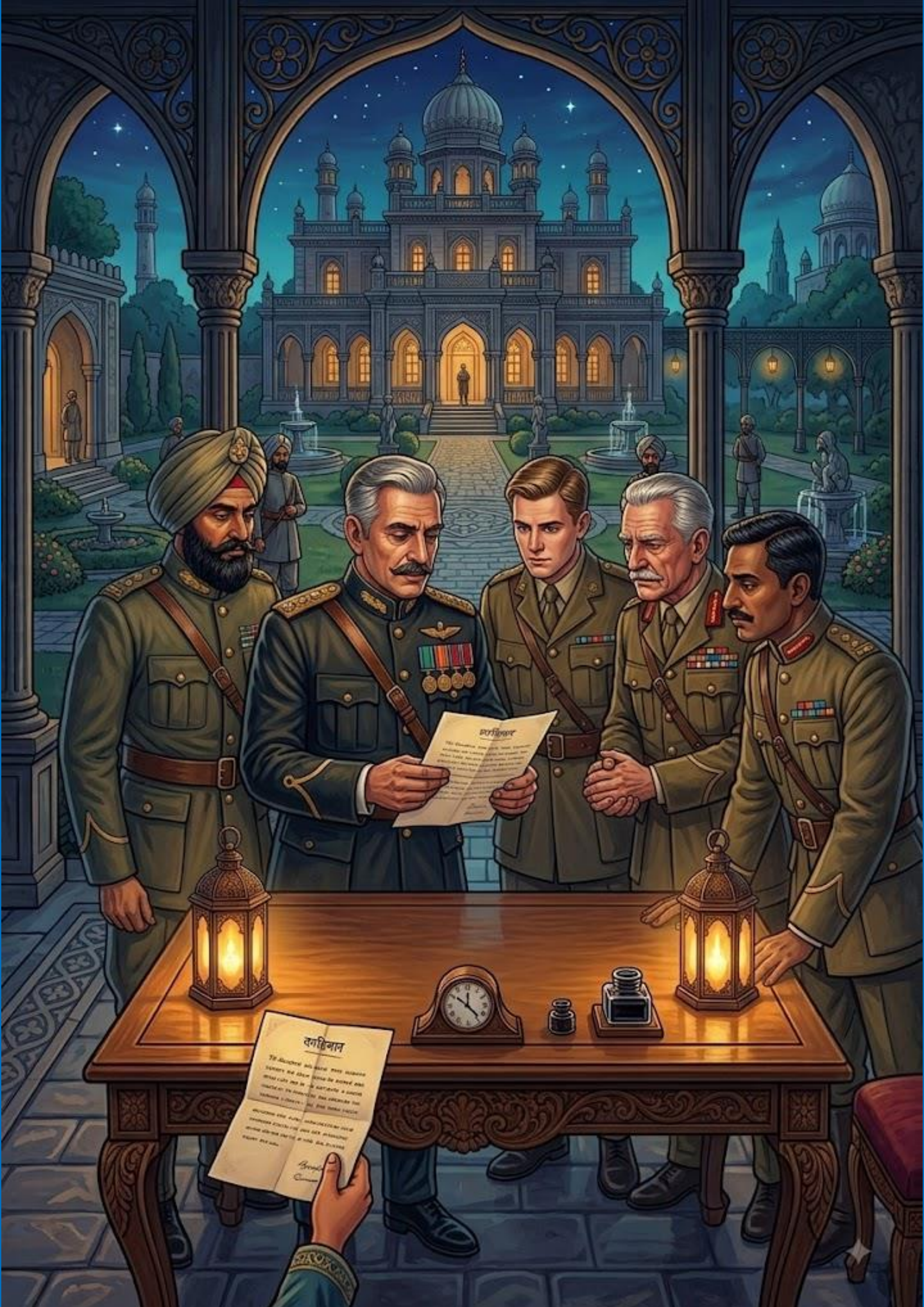
Kim tossed the tissue paper toward him, saying, "This is the proof."

The officer threw a rupee coin toward him as a reward. Kim picked up the coin, but remained lying there on the grass.

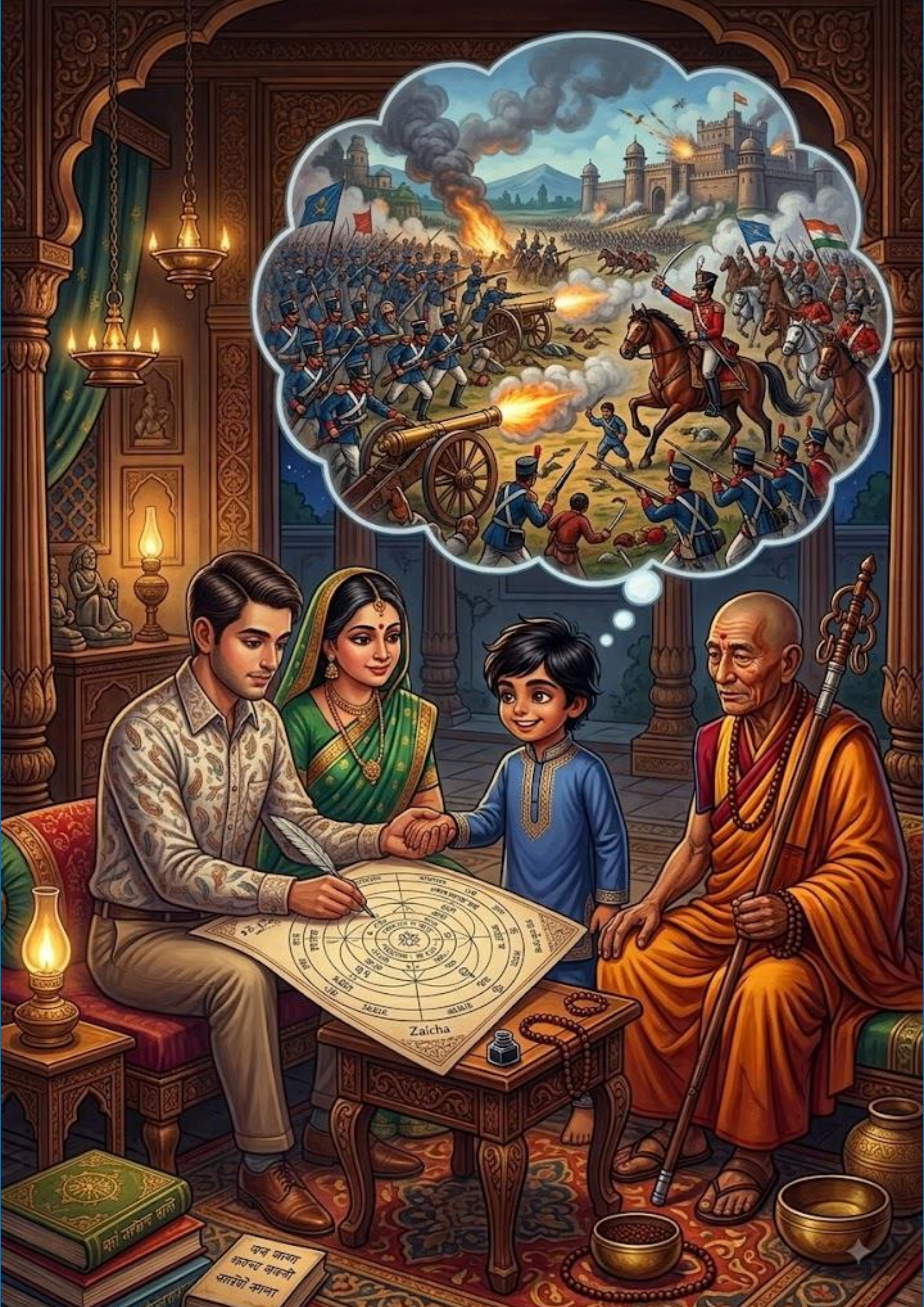
He wanted to see what the real matter was. The British officer went into a room and began examining the message very closely under an oil lamp. A woman's voice called out, "Guests are arriving, dear."



Then the guests arrived there, but everyone's attention remained focused on the message sent by Mahbub Ali. One of them said, "This is no longer a matter of weeks, but of days—indeed, of hours. Senior officers are also coming here today, so we will discuss this issue with them today itself. The highest authorities should also be informed immediately. Swift action will have to be taken. Eight thousand men will be required, and the officers will also decide regarding the military equipment." Another officer remarked, "That means war." The response came, "Not war—a punishment. A telegram should be dispatched immediately, but with the new code. Now, we should not keep the ladies waiting any longer. Later, during cigar time, we will speak more on this subject." A grand party was taking place there, which the Commander-in-Chief was also attending. Kim returned home, having obtained the information he had wanted to gather. The Lama was still asleep.

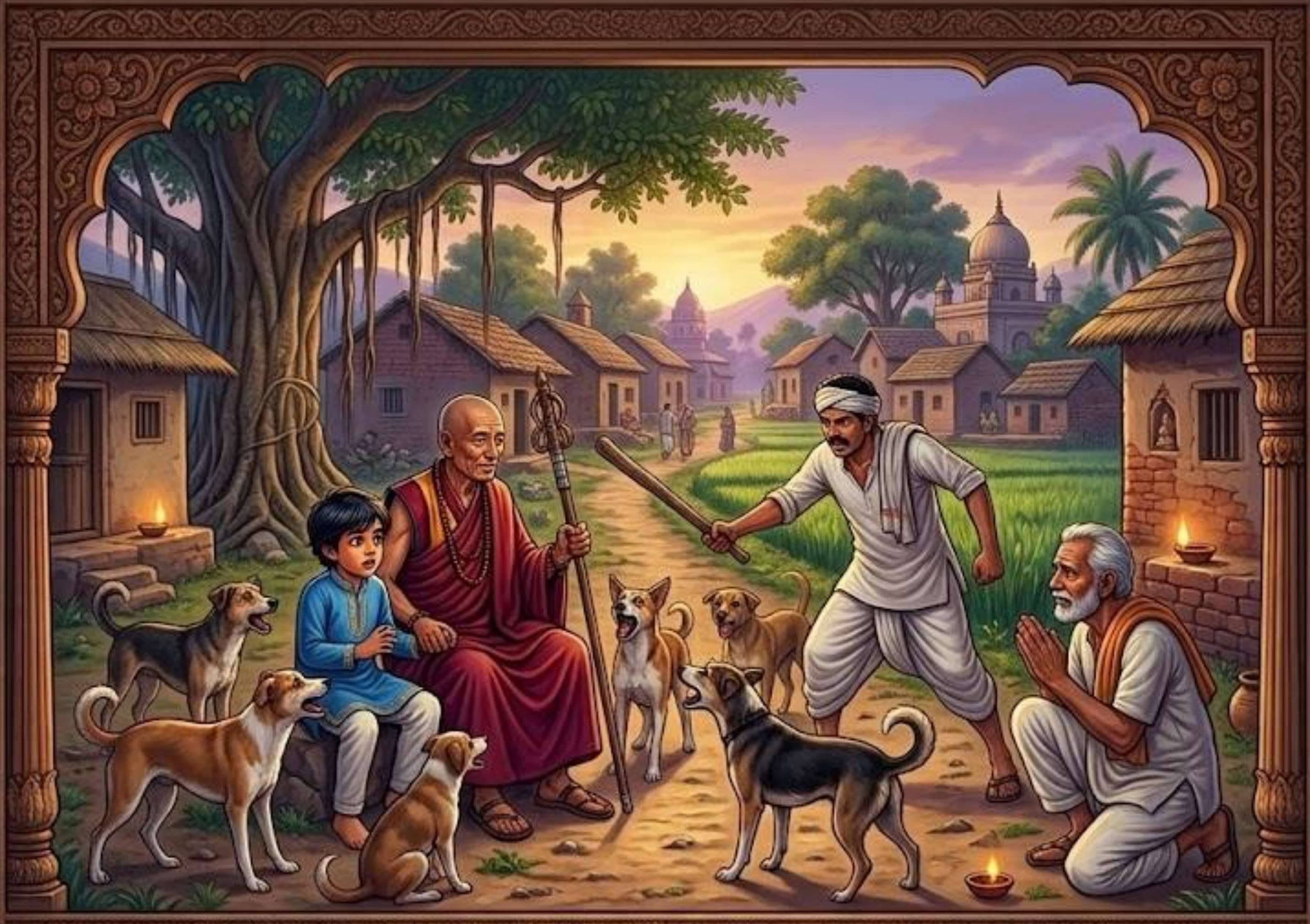


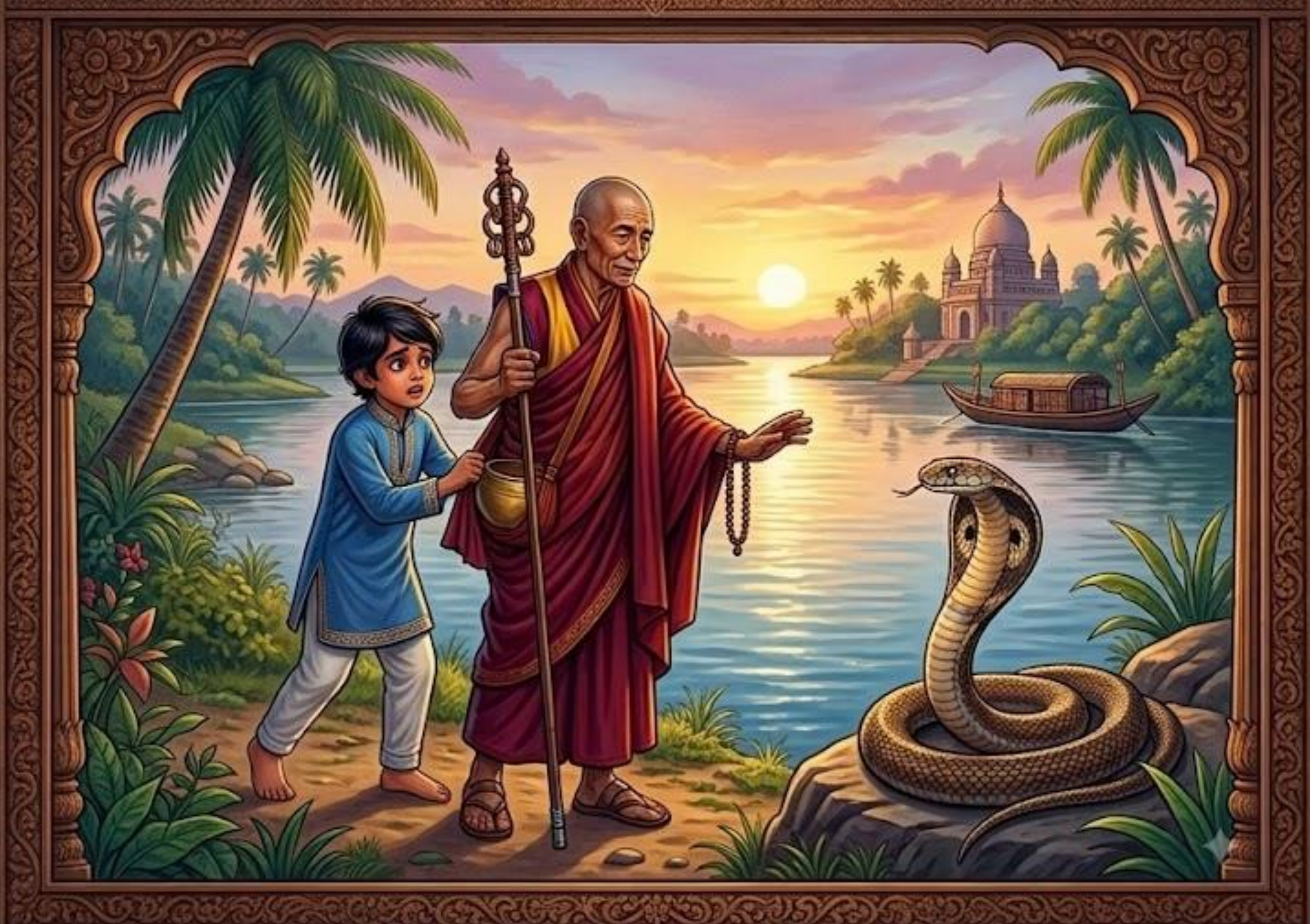
Later, Kim expressed a wish to his host to have his future told through astrology. Kim shared that he was born when a severe earthquake hit Kashmir. This was a well-known time. After calculating for a while, the host said that three days from now, two men would do something important for him. "However, I also see armed men and war. All of this is going to happen very soon; be careful." The Lama remarked, "We are peace-loving people, merely in search of our Holy River." Kim, on the other hand, was smiling because he had already overheard the officers talking about war after he delivered his message. The Lama also inquired about his Holy River from the host, but he could tell him nothing. Those people insisted greatly that they stay, but the Lama thanked the Hindu family and resumed the journey with Kim. They were given a generous amount of food and some money as well. After exchanging prayers from both sides, Kim and the Lama took their leave.


Zaicha

Upon seeing them in a village, a pack of dogs began barking. Hearing the noise, a farmer came outside and angrily yelled, "Beggars, get off my field!" Kim told him, "He is no beggar, but a holy man. If you are rude, your crops could end up ruined." At this, the farmer's behavior changed, and, growing frightened, he pleaded not to be cursed, adding that they could have food and milk if needed. The Lama remarked, "In anger, a person loses self-control, and anger destroys one's ability to reason." Blessing the farmer with prayers for a good harvest, they resumed their journey.

Reaching a small canal, they spotted a large snake. Kim recoiled in fear at the sight of it and said it should be killed, but the Lama insisted that it be left alone, as it too had the right to live. It was the first time Kim had ever seen a person standing so close to a snake without showing any fear.

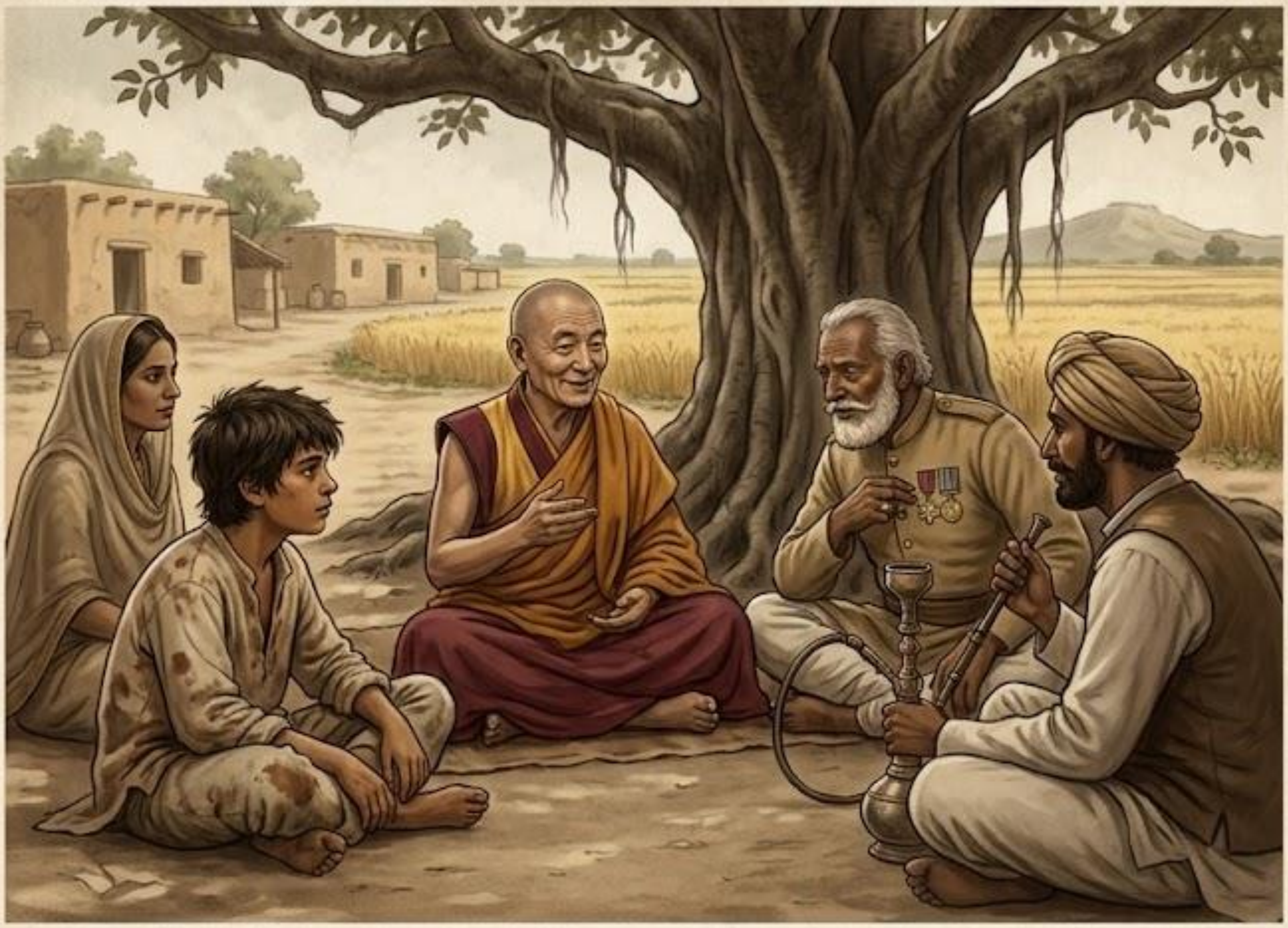


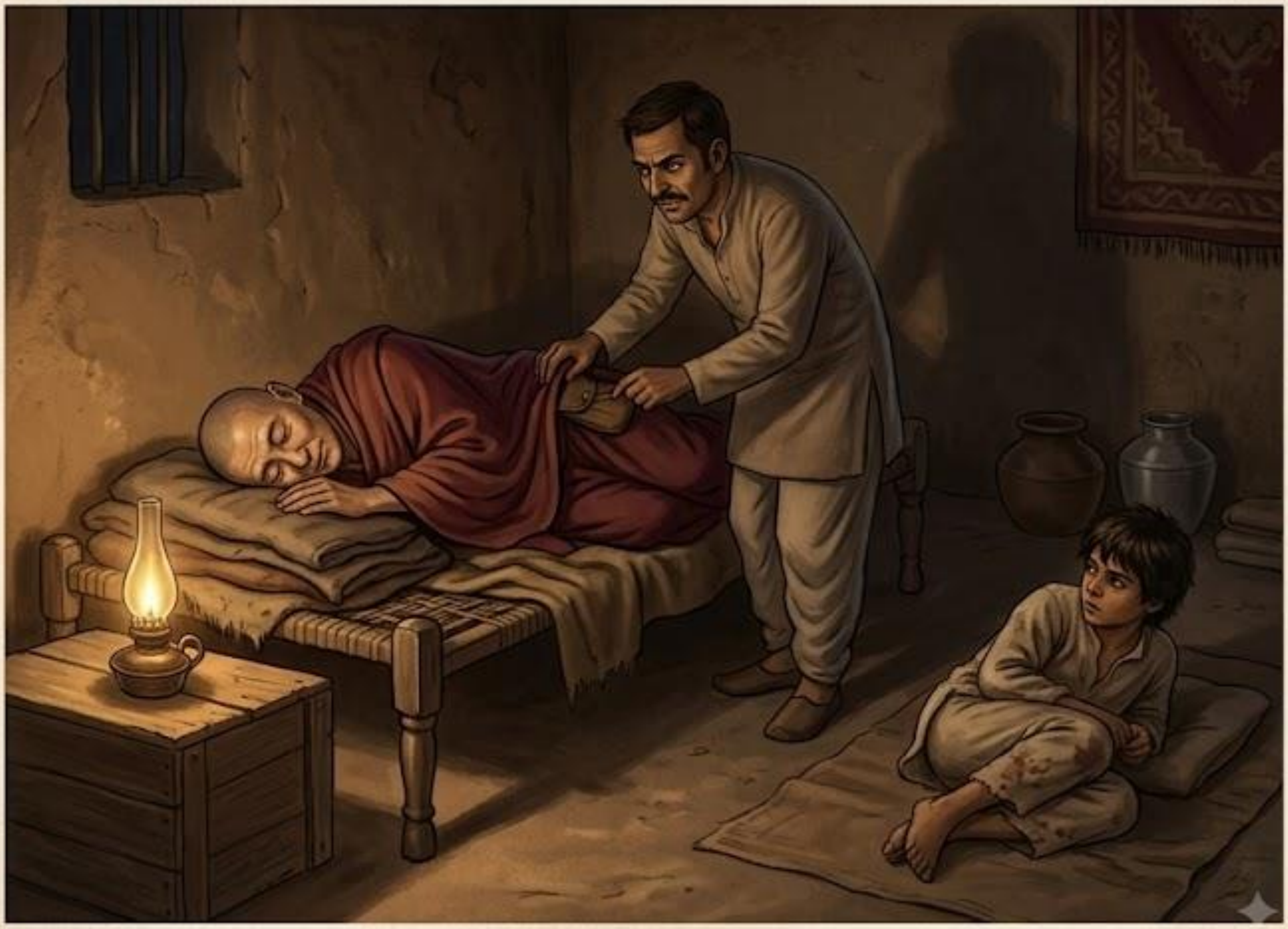


They resumed their journey, passing through fields while continuing their search for the Holy River.

They reached a village, where the village headman (*nambardar*) and the priest gave them food and a place to rest. When the Lama told them about the Holy River, they doubted his mental health on account of his old age. Kim also shared the prophecy of his own success with them. An old man, who had joined the army during the Mutiny, remarked that this was believable, as wars were a constant reality on the borders. In recognition of his service, this old veteran had been granted land in the village, and his three sons were now army officers as well. When Kim mentioned that eight thousand soldiers would take part in the war, the old man replied that his sons had made no mention of such a large-scale conflict.

At night, Kim took the Lama's money for safekeeping. In the morning, when the Lama remarked that he had slept unusually soundly, Kim's suspicion was confirmed: the Lama had been drugged through his milk in an attempt to steal his money.





When they set off, the old soldier accompanied them for a short distance to show them the way. Crops were growing among the mango trees, and the voices of working farmers could be heard. The Lama felt regret that he should have given a donation to the temple, while the old soldier related how, during the Mutiny, soldiers had turned against their own officers in a fit of madness. Out of six hundred and eighty soldiers, only three did not join the rebellion, and the old soldier was one of them. All the people—his relatives, brothers, and friends—began reviling him for taking the side of the British. No one was willing to understand that he was merely performing his duties with a sense of devotion and merit. People would tell him to stop siding with the British, claiming that their time in India had run out. Yet, to save the lives of a British memsahib and her child, he rode seventy miles on horseback.

He remained loyal to the British and also tried to stop fellow Indians from turning fanatical. Some of those British officers had now become generals, yet they still remembered him. His loyalty was duly rewarded. On the occasion of her jubilee, the Queen conferred upon him the Order of British India, which he always wore around his neck, and he was also granted an estate as a reward. Some prominent figures from that era, who had gone on to become commissioners and high officials, continued to visit him. They would talk of war and of those who sacrificed their lives.

The Lama asked, "And then?"

The reply came, "And then they would leave, but not before the entire village had seen these great men."

The Lama questioned, "What, after all, will be your end?"

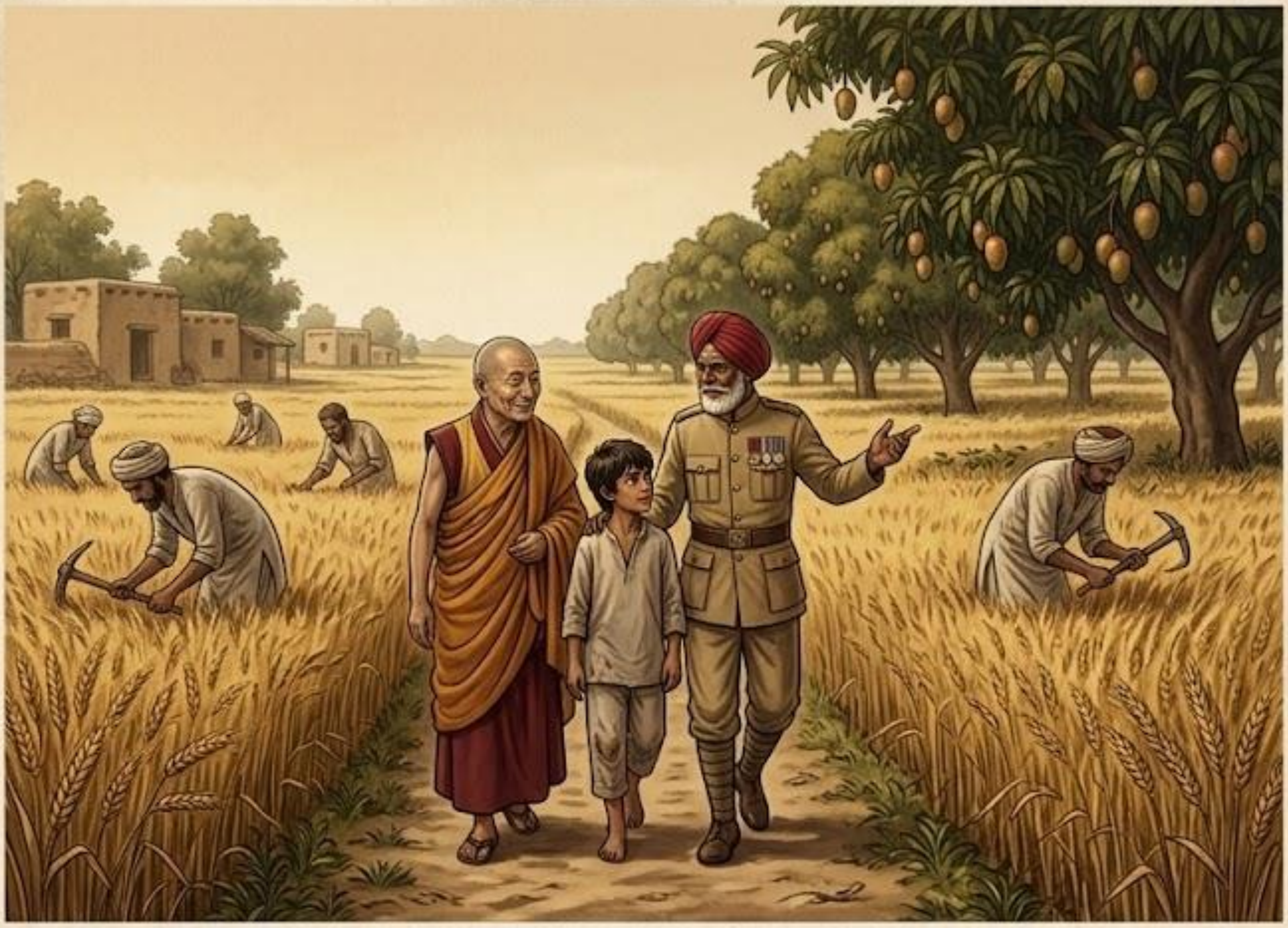
The reply came, "Death."

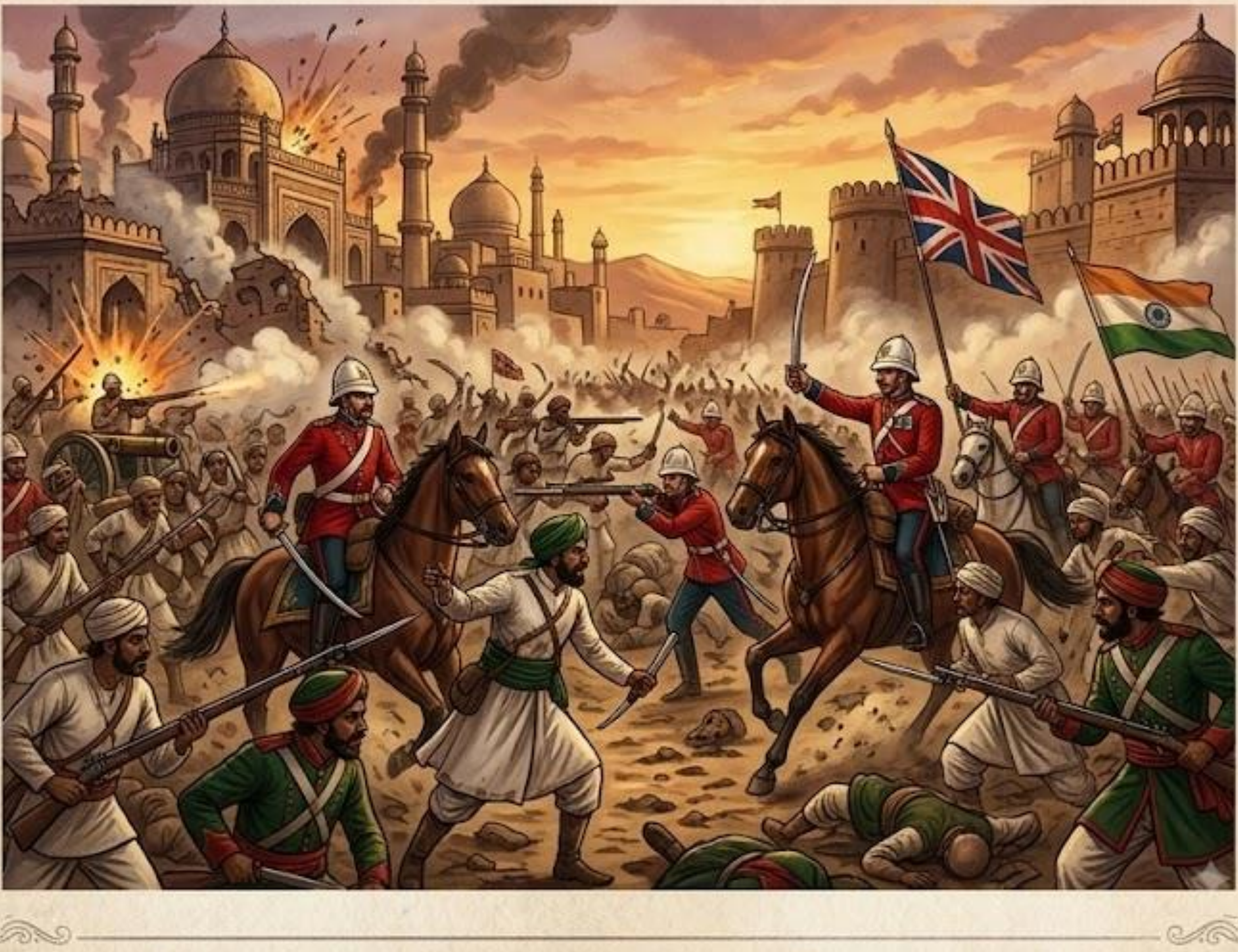
"And after that?" asked the Lama.

"Then, whatever God wills," replied the soldier. "He will grant me a cool place where I shall await my sons, who are themselves majors in the army."

The Lama remarked that they too would continue traveling from one life to another on the wheel of existence—a difficult and painful journey. "In truth, our strength is our real weakness. The purpose of life is something else, yet we are traveling in an entirely different direction."

Tired from talking, the old soldier and the Lama fell asleep under the mango trees in the warm weather. Kim, concerned that there might be snakes around, took precautions.





Upon waking, they traveled together until they reached the great highway, the Grand Trunk Road—a vast artery spanning a massive portion of India. Before the arrival of the railway, it held supreme importance, yet even now, people of every race, color, and creed traversed it using all manner of conveyances.

After bidding farewell to the old soldier, Kim and the Lama continued their journey along this fifteen-hundred-mile stretch. In all the world, there was nothing quite like it. The Lama remained absorbed in his thoughts, paying little attention to the bustling crowd, whereas Kim felt as though all of India had converged into a single place before his eyes, a sight that sent his spirits soaring to the seventh heaven.

Kim and the Lama traveled in silence for a time. At last, Kim exclaimed, "What a beautiful place this is! The south is truly wonderful; even the climate and the water are fine."

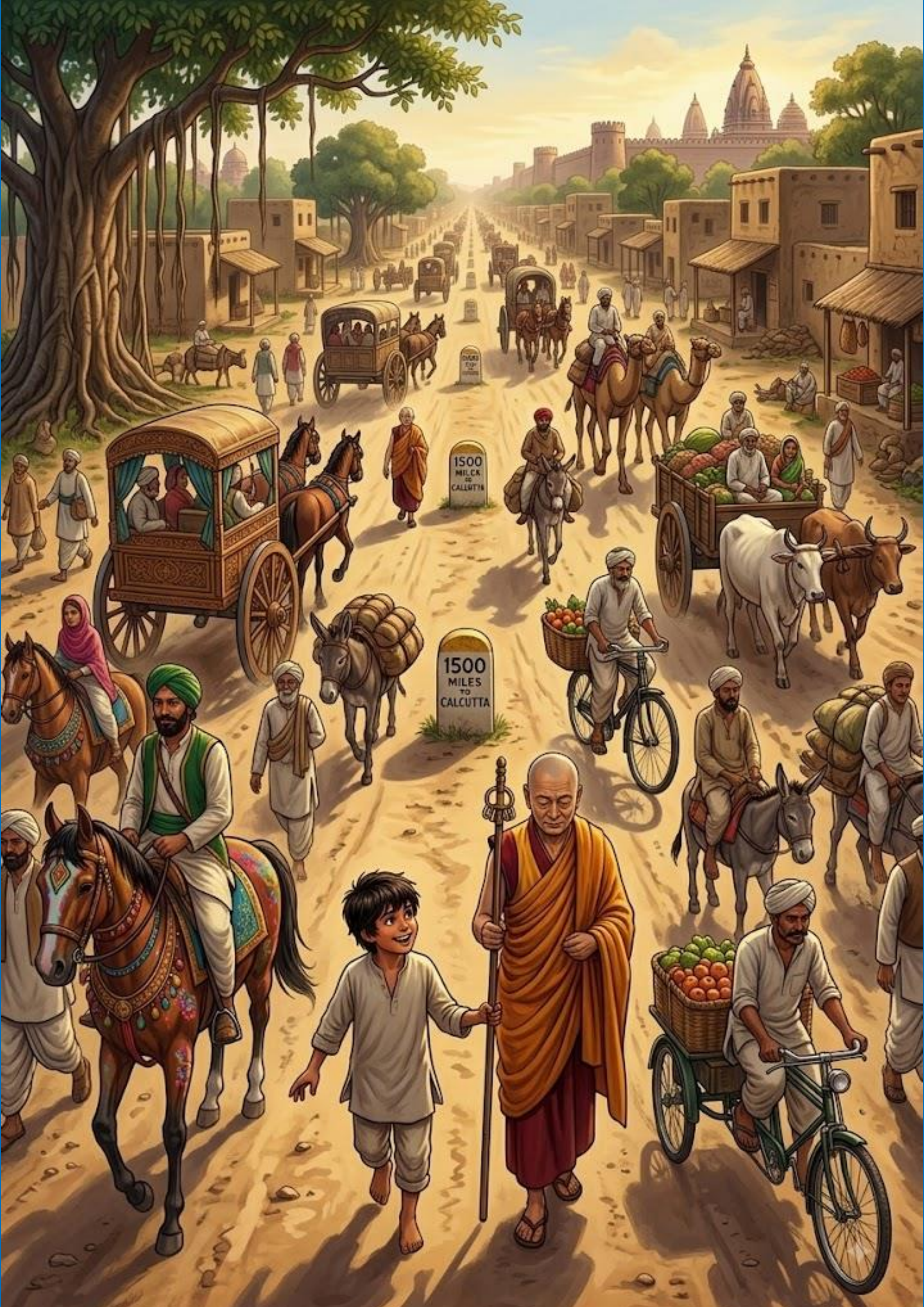
"In truth, we are merely traveling from one life to the next, turning on the Wheel of Life," the Lama replied.

Kim noted, "We have covered a great distance and fatigue is setting in. The sun is about to set, so why not rest under the shade of these trees?"

"Where shall we eat tonight?" asked the Lama.

Kim assured him, "The world is full of good people," before softly adding, "and besides, we still have money with us."

As night descended, the comforting aroma of bread baking over wood fires drifted in from the distance.

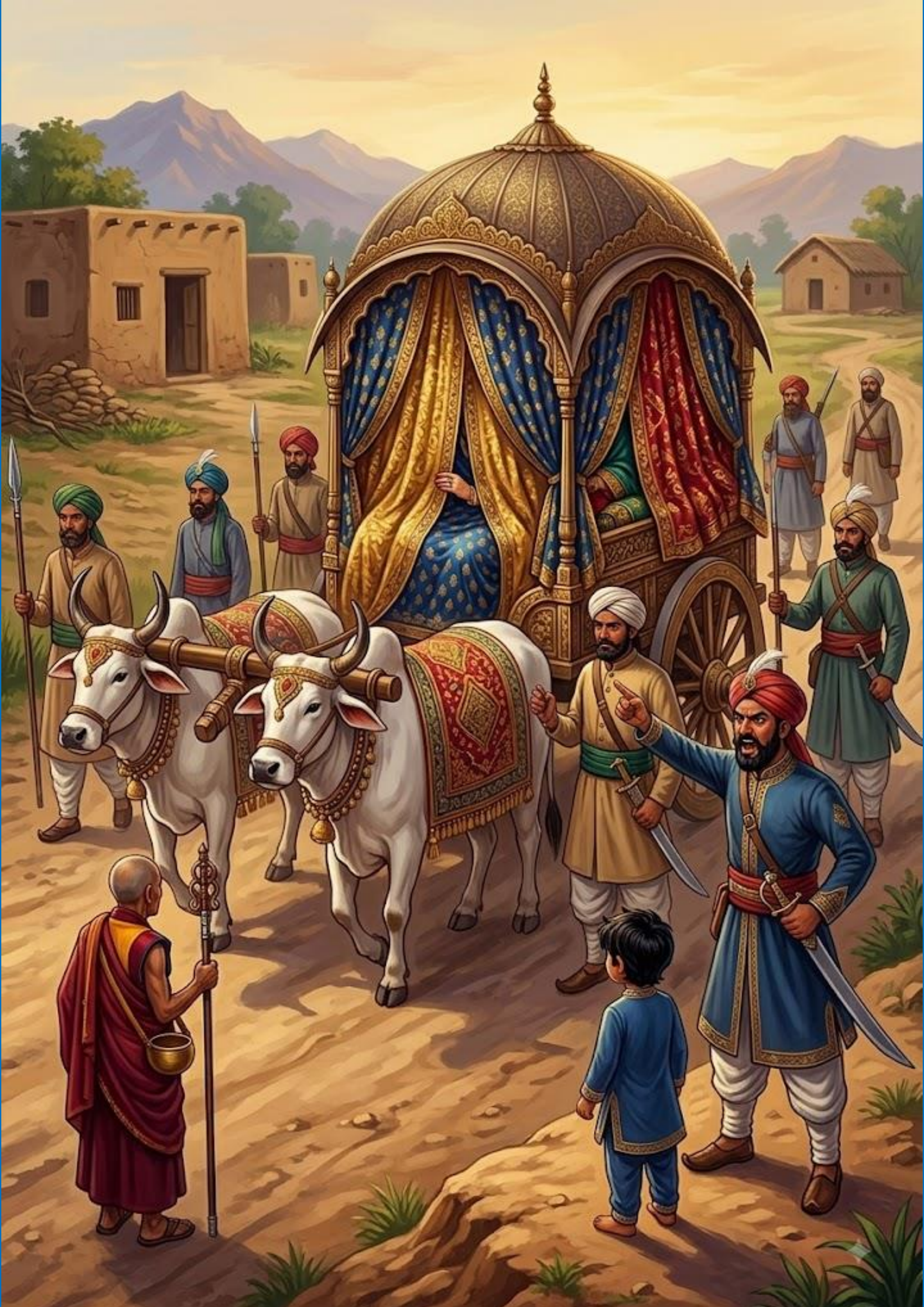


1500 MILES TO CALCUTTA
1500 MILCK CALLUTTA

A bullock cart arrived, fitted with fine new curtains so it could be used as a comfortable traveling carriage. Eight guards were protecting it, two of whom even carried swords—the sheer grandeur signaling that someone wealthy was traveling. Kim overheard the voice of an old woman issuing orders in anger. Half of her servants hailed from Kim's region, while the other half were hillmen.

Kim deliberately decided to stay close to that spot and lit a fire. When one of the hillmen servants barked at Kim to get lost, calling him a beggar, the Lama asked what was happening. Upon noticing the Lama alongside Kim, the hillman panicked and admitted he had almost committed a sin by mistake. The old woman angrily demanded to know why they hadn't driven the beggars away, but when the servant informed her about the holy Lama, her attitude shifted completely, and she respectfully sent food and blankets for him.

By this time, Kim and the Lama had grown deeply fond of each other. At the old woman's request, the Lama went to meet her. They conversed on religious matters at length, and the old woman expressed her wish for the Lama to travel alongside her and pray that her daughter be blessed with a second son.

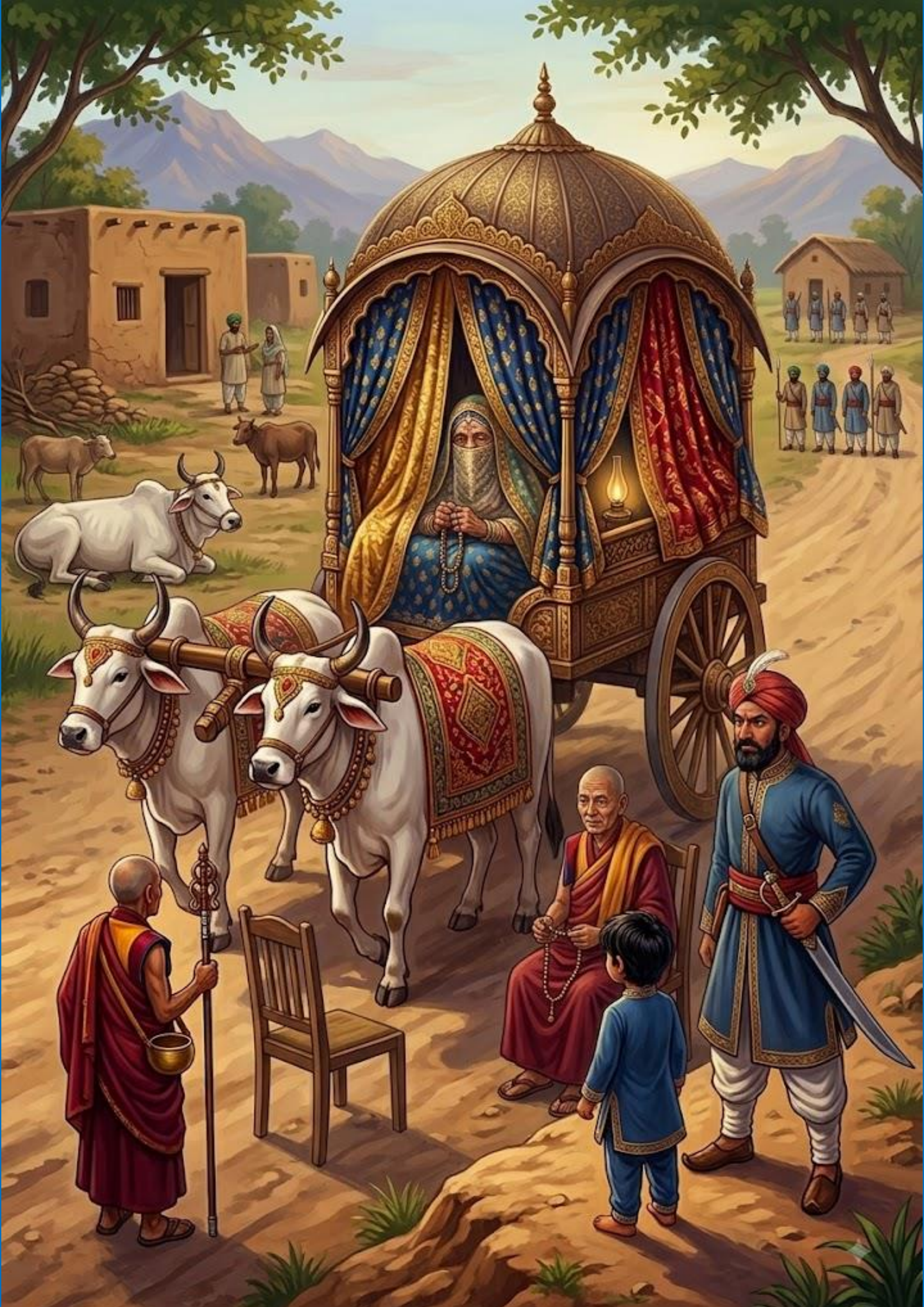


The next morning, all of India awoke alongside them. The sounds of humans, birds, and animals began filling the air, and food started cooking over open fires. Kim found all of this utterly captivating. The old woman was shouting orders at her servants at the top of her lungs. The journey resumed, with Kim and the Lama now walking alongside her caravan.

The woman spoke continuously of religious matters along the way. Occasionally, a glimpse of her face would show, though it remained veiled. At night, a delicious meal was prepared. The old woman wished to know how many sons her daughter would bear; she spoke of her grand hill country and complained about the bad weather in this region, even expressing irritation over her spoiled tobacco.

The slow-moving caravan pushed onward. When it eventually came to a halt at one spot, the Lama turned to Kim and remarked, "This woman is wise, but..."

Kim interrupted him, saying, "All women are like that."



Kim spotted four men walking together in the distance and exclaimed, "Those are soldiers—white soldiers!" The soldiers' flag also came into view, depicting a red bull standing upon a green field. Kim gasped out, "This is exact prophet's prediction!" Breathing heavily in shock and wonder, he made the Lama step back and stay behind while he himself crept on his belly, crawling quietly toward the soldiers' camp.

Suddenly stepping out of the tent, Chaplain Bennett spotted Kim lying on the ground and grabbed him. Kim struggled fiercely to break free, but he was hauled inside the tent and interrogated, "Who are you? Are you a thief?"

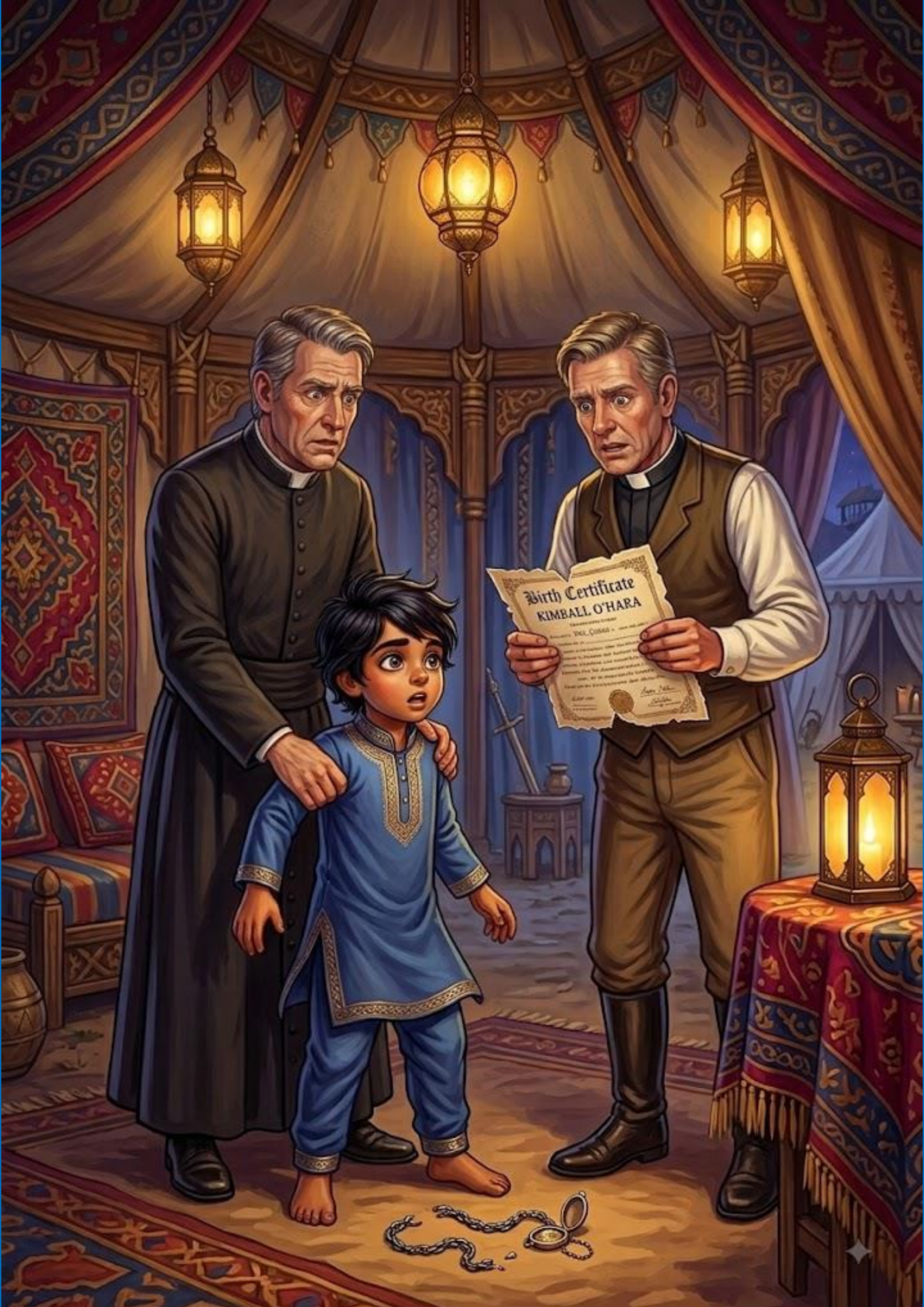
Kim made another desperate bid to escape. As Mr. Bennett lunged to restrain him, the large amulet-like leather pouch hanging around Kim's neck snapped and came away in his hand.

"I am not a thief!" Kim blurted out in rapid English. "That is mine! Give it back to me!"

Mr. Bennett and Father Victor were astounded to hear a street urchin speak English and to find such a significant pouch around his neck. When Kim demanded his amulet back, they insisted on opening it to inspect its contents first.

Inside lay Kim's birth certificate, upon which his father had written his regiment number, his name, and a plea that the boy be well cared for. Father Victor gasped in utter disbelief, "Why, this is Kimball O'Hara's son! I myself witnessed his marriage to Annie Shott—and look, beneath his shirt, his skin is white!"

Kim spoke up urgently, "Give that back to me and let me go! I am not a thief—I am the disciple of a holy man!"

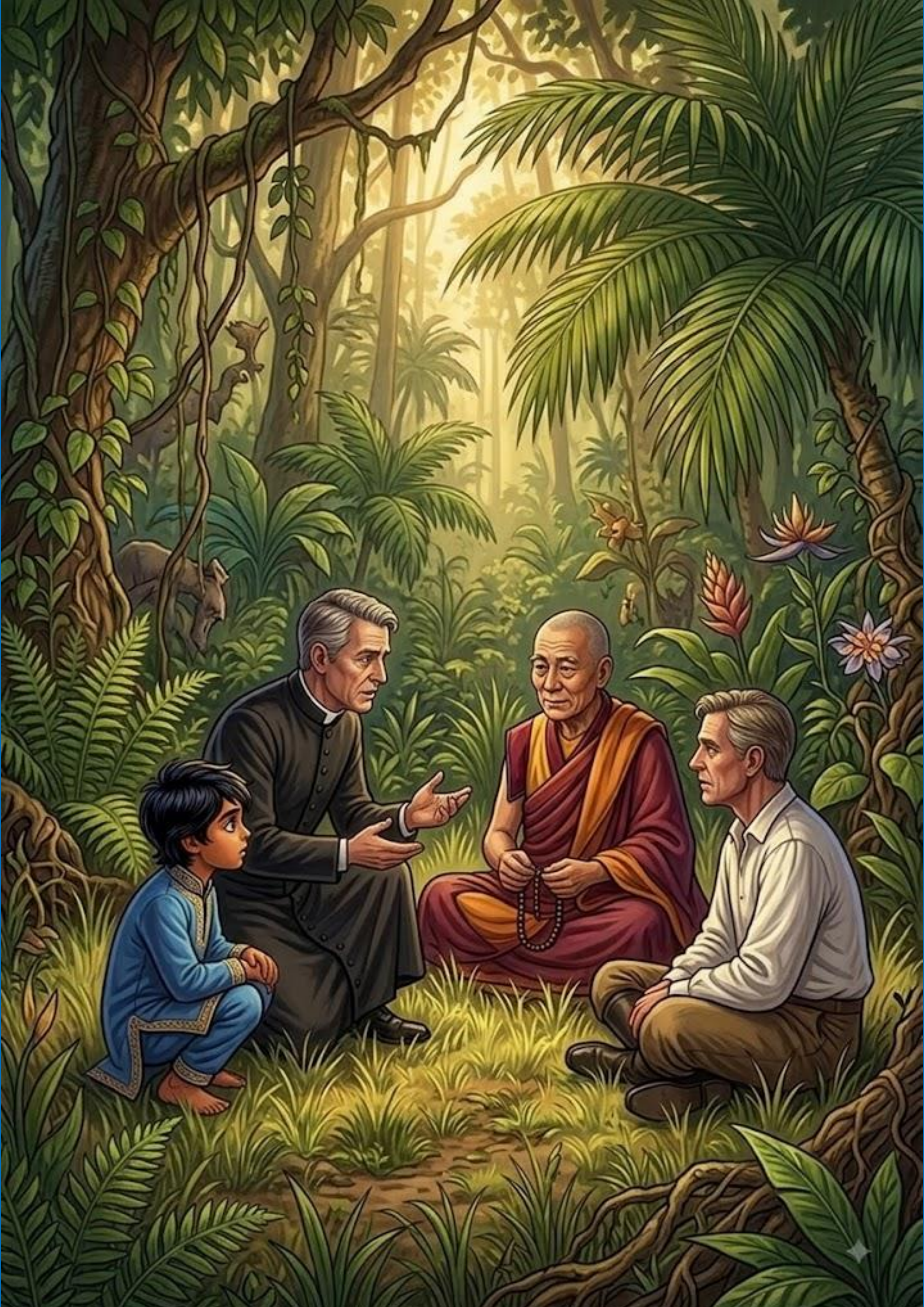

Birth Certificate
KIMBALL O'HARA

They all walked over to the Lama. Kim lamented, "I have found my destiny, yet who knows where these circumstances will take me or what these donkeys will do to me!" The Englishmen instructed Kim to tell his Lama in his own language that because he was the child of an Englishman, he was a *sahib*, and would now be enrolled in school. After conveying this, Kim whispered to the Lama, "They spoke of putting me in a school before, but I will run away and return to you." Observing the sadness on the Lama's face, the Englishmen asked about Buddha and the Holy River. They then stated that the regiment would cover the expenses for Kim's education. Kim reassured the Lama, "They will not let me go right now—this is precisely what was prophesied. Go back to the kind old woman, and I will escape later to join you." The Englishmen remained firm that Kim's education was essential, even if it meant leaving the Lama alone, as there was no other choice.

After a long silence, the Lama spoke, "Kim, when I met you, I believed you were sent to aid me, yet each of us must complete our own journey." Father Victor did not fully grasp the words, but he keenly felt the underlying pain. Upon learning that Kim would be trained to become a soldier after his schooling, the Lama asked in which city he would be educated and how much money would be required for proper schooling and sustenance. Father Victor explained that he would initially be taught at the military orphanage, though the finest education in India was provided at St. Xavier's in Lucknow, which required two to three hundred rupees a year—a very large sum.

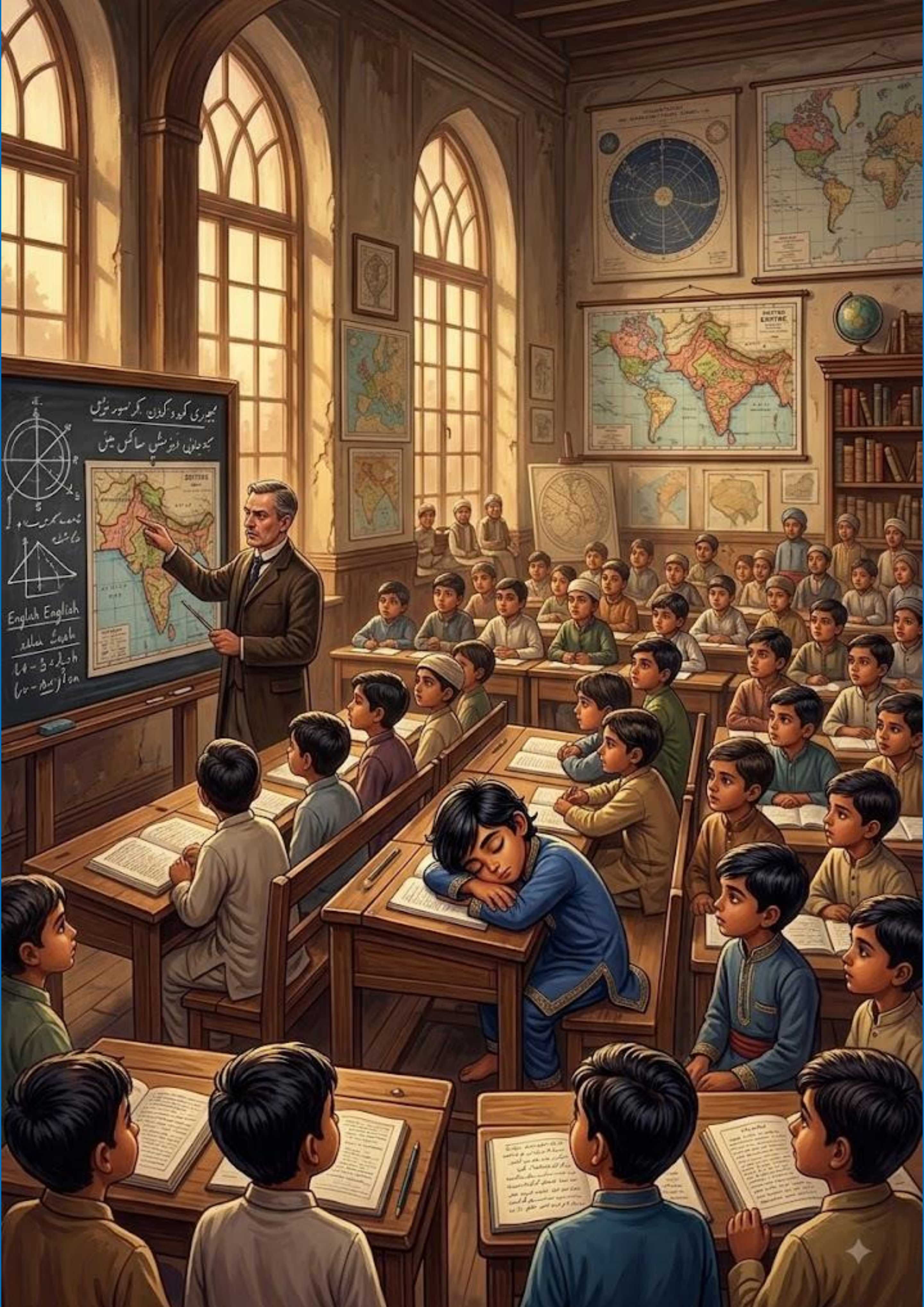
The Lama requested Father Victor to write down his name and address. The moment the slip of paper was handed to him, he stood up swiftly and departed, announcing that he would continue his search for the Holy River.

Following the Lama's departure, Kim was handed over to another soldier, who sternly warned him not to attempt an escape and to remain grateful to the Regiment of the Red Bull for coming to his aid, adding that Sanawar School would turn him into a fine man. Kim countered, "You are not going there; you are going to war—eight thousand troops, along with heavy weaponry." Treating his words as a joke, everyone burst into laughter, while Father Victor and Mr. Bennett kept a close watch over him. However, when official orders to mobilize for war arrived that very evening, a stunned Father Victor asked Kim how he could have possibly known in advance. Sensing his triumph, Kim merely smiled and offered no reply.

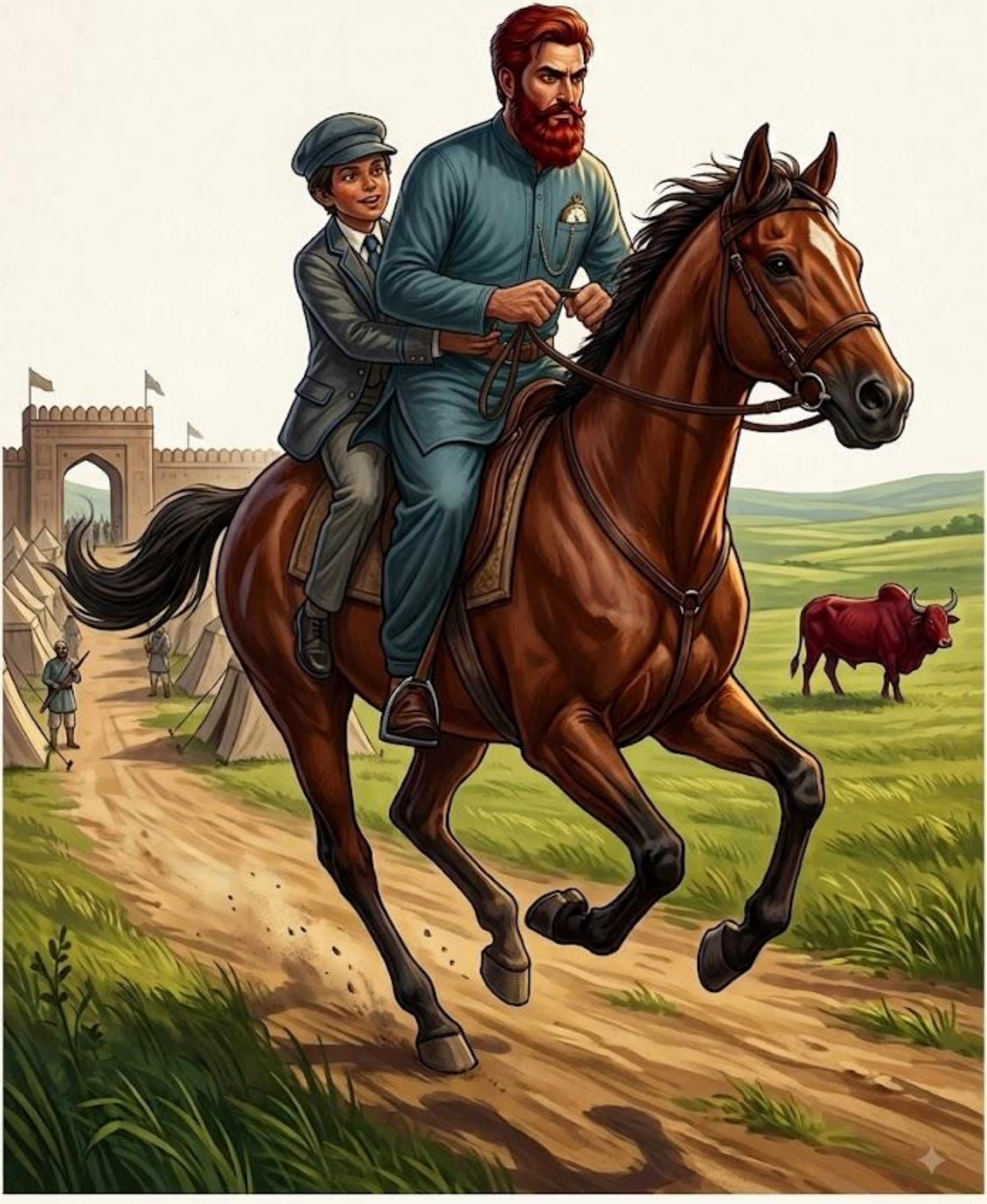


With all but the sick, the women, and the children departing for the front, other boys were assigned to keep watch over Kim. A man angrily informed him that he was the schoolmaster, to which Kim retorted with equal wrath. Taking Kim by the ear, the schoolmaster dragged him into another classroom filled with children reciting their lessons. Kim sat down and drifted off to sleep.

The moment class ended, Kim bolted for the door first, but his guard intercepted him. Obtaining permission, Kim summoned a letter writer and dictated a detailed message to Mahbub Ali, pleading to be rescued from his predicament. He then endured three miserable days in captivity.

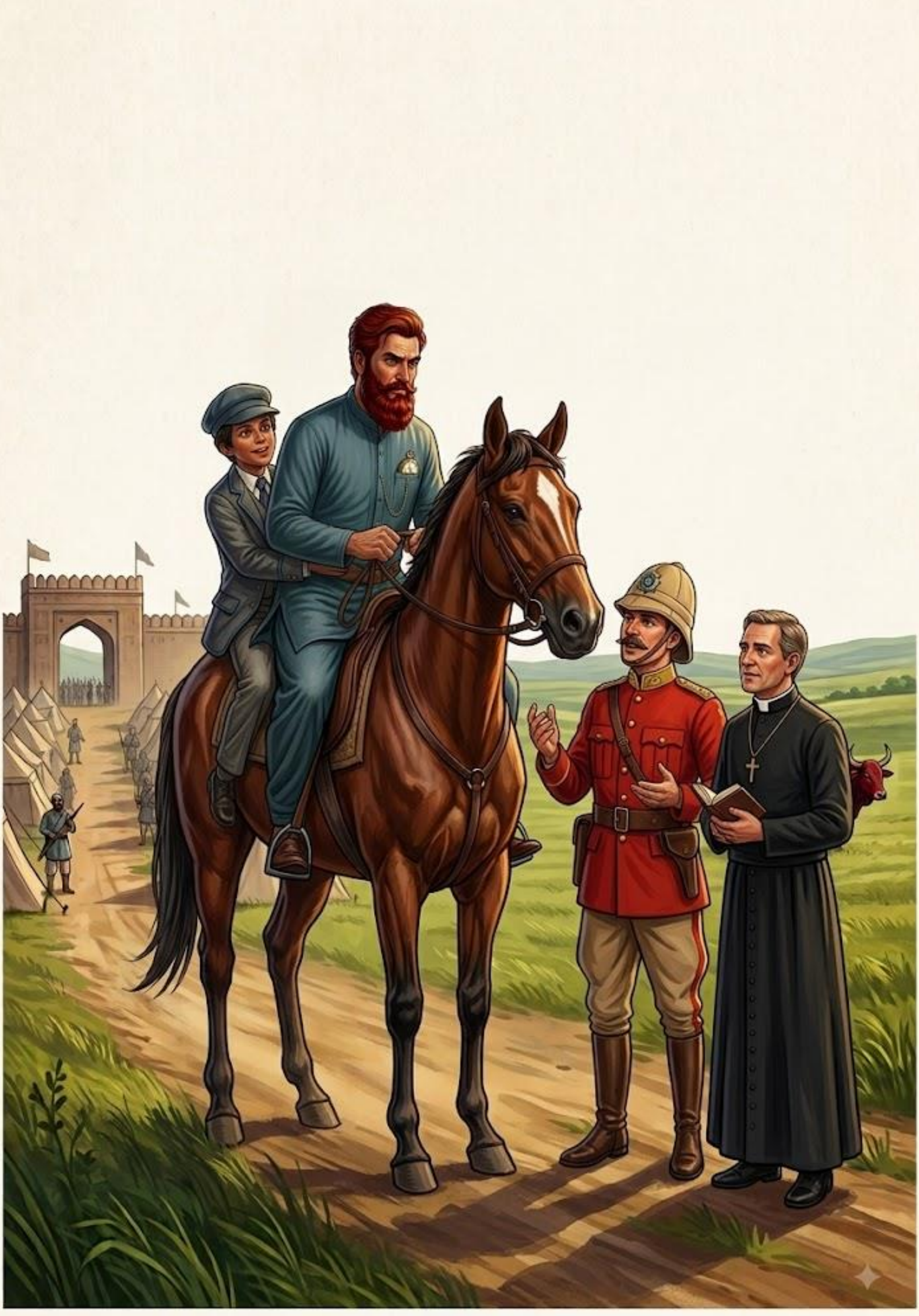

English English

Then Mahbub Ali placed Kim onto his horse and galloped away, spiriting him far from that place.

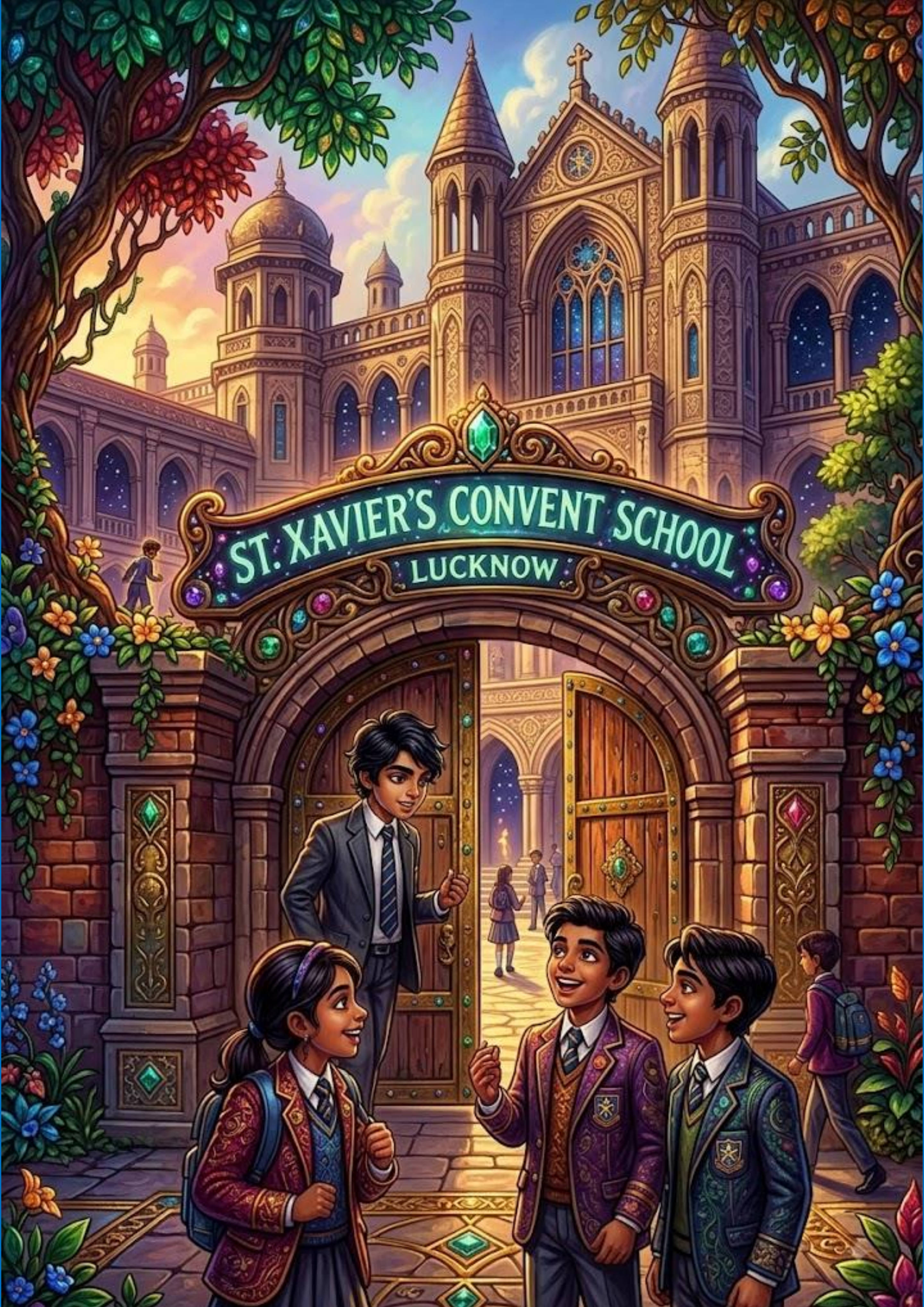


However, a British officer spotted him and expressed a desire to buy the horse. When he inquired about Kim, Mahbub Ali explained that though the boy's father was a soldier, Kim had no wish to stay here; he preferred living an ordinary life among ordinary people. Mahbub added that while they wanted to turn him into a fine soldier, Kim would at the very least make an exceptional messenger—reminding the officer that Kim was the one who had delivered the message regarding the horses to him earlier. Hearing this, Kim felt deeply humiliated and was seized with intense anger, yet he remained silent. In truth, Mahbub Ali was demonstrating that the boy possessed the discipline to control his temper. Spotting Father Victor nearby, Kim called out to him, prompting Colonel Creighton to inquire details about Kim from the chaplain.

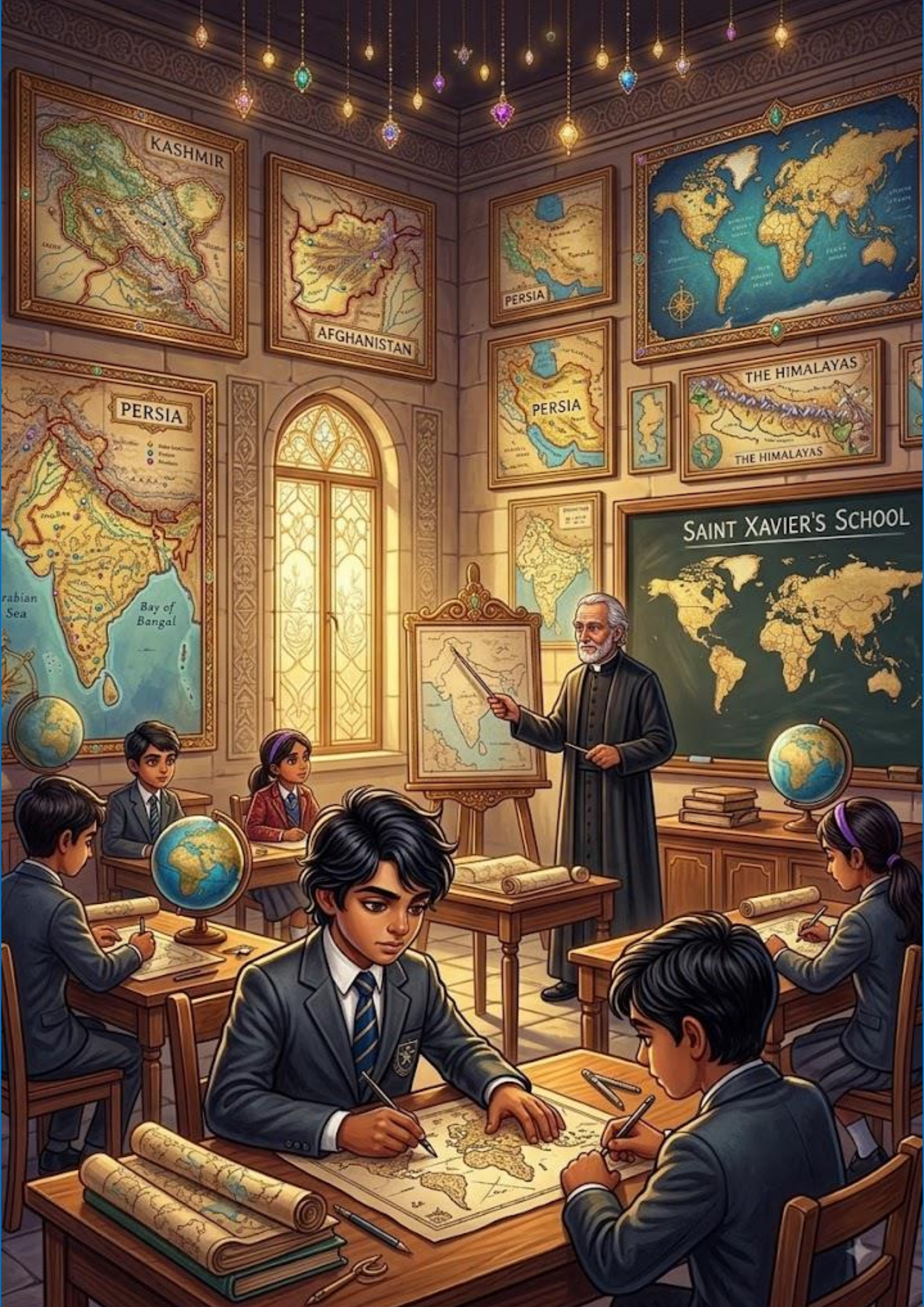
Mahbub Ali reassured Kim that all these men were his well-wishers who had his best interests at heart, but Kim remained resentful that he hadn't simply been allowed to escape. Father Victor then astonished everyone present by revealing that the Lama had sent three hundred rupees to cover Kim's tuition so he could attend India's finest school in Lucknow. Father Victor himself was marveling at how a simple Lama could procure such a large sum and show such incredible generosity toward an English boy. Colonel Creighton declared that he would personally take Kim with him next week to enroll him in the prestigious Lucknow school. Though Kim was far from pleased, Mahbub Ali and the others knew this was the best path forward for his future.



Kim was enrolled at St. Xavier's Convent School in Lucknow, the best school in India. All the children here were Anglo-Indian, and the atmosphere was pleasant.


ST. XAVIER'S CONVENT SCHOOL
LUCKNOW

Kim was taught the art of mapmaking. For secret agents and spies working for the British government, who traveled to remote and far-off regions, the ability to draft accurate maps was absolutely essential.

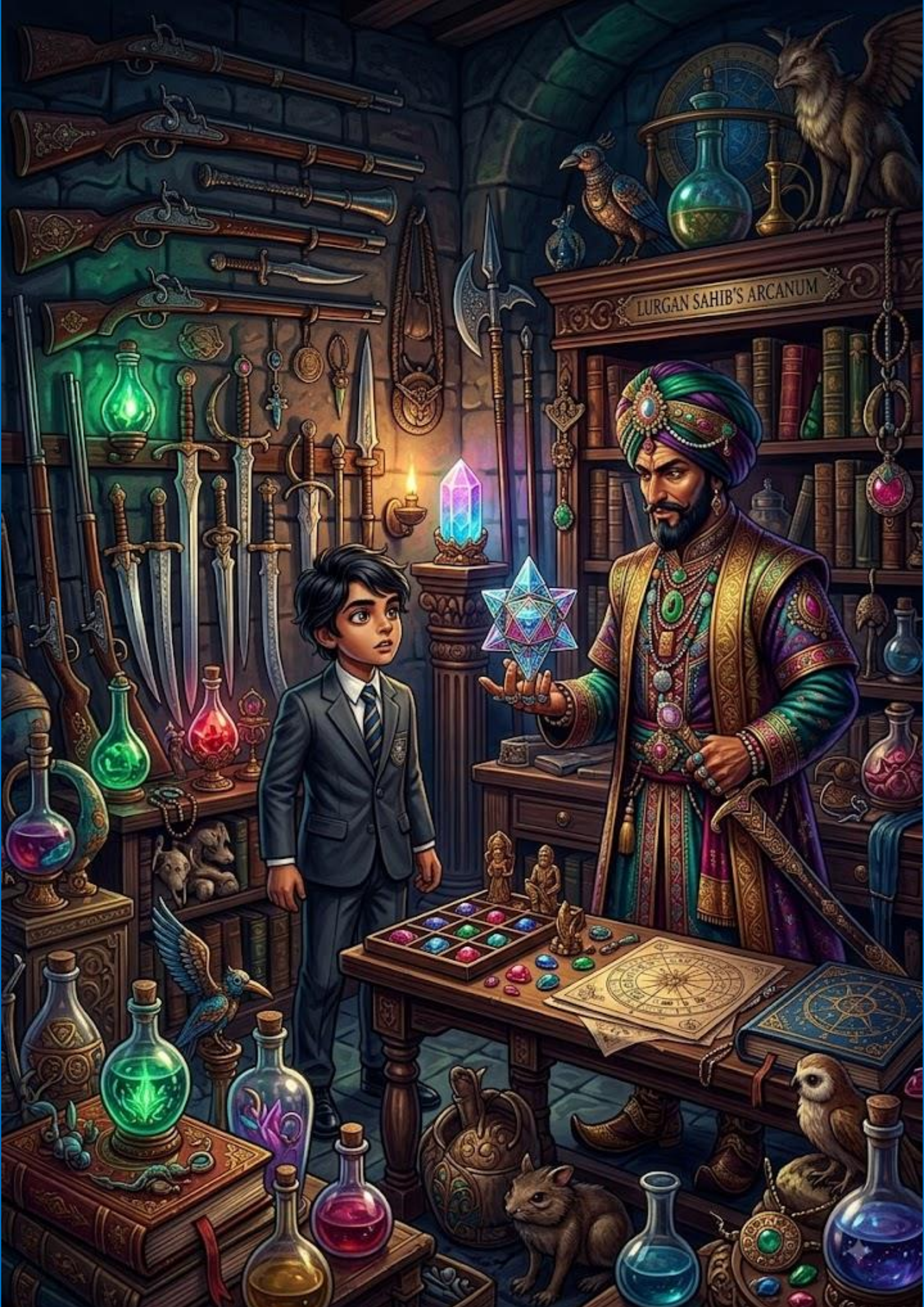

KASHMIR
AFGHANISTAN
PERSIA
PERSIA
PERSIA
THE HIMALAYAS
THE HIMALAYAS
SAINT XAVIER'S SCHOOL
rabian Sea
Bay of Bangal

A year passed. When the holidays arrived, Kim longed to roam freely. He ran away to Mahbub Ali, who took him to the hilly region of Simla. There, Mahbub Ali received word from Colonel Creighton, who asked Kim if he had fled from school; Kim replied, "No, I am merely spending my summer holidays."

He visited Mr. Lurgan's shop, which was filled with magical and mysterious curios. Mr. Lurgan asked him, "Are you afraid?" Kim replied, "Afraid? Why should I be? Not at all."

Upon hearing this, Mr. Lurgan said, "Until your school in Lucknow reopens, you will stay with me and sleep in this room—that is an order." The room pointed out for him to sleep in was pitch black. When Mr. Lurgan raised a lantern, Kim saw numerous masks, swords, and daggers hanging on the walls. Kim had seen similar objects before at the Lahore Museum. Beneath a table sat a boy. Kim realized that Mr. Lurgan, and perhaps this boy as well, were trying to frighten him. He then said aloud, "This place is just like a museum; where is my bed to sleep?"

Kim sensed that Mr. Lurgan could even read his thoughts. Mr. Lurgan casually remarked, "This boy once tried to poison and kill me, and he might try to kill you too. Perhaps he is jealous of you." He spoke of poison so nonchalantly, as if it were a trivial matter, adding, "Perhaps he loves me and does not want you to stay here."


LURGAN SAHIB'S ARCANUM

"Well, will you drink some water?" He reached out his hand toward a glass placed far away, and his arm stretched out until it reached the glass. The glass then found its way to Kim, while Mr. Lurgan remained seated in his spot. How could a hand reach fifteen feet away? Kim sat thoroughly bewildered and amazed.

He then remarked, "That is incredible!"

Pleased by the compliment, Mr. Lurgan said, "Now throw it back over there."

Kim hesitated, "But it will break."

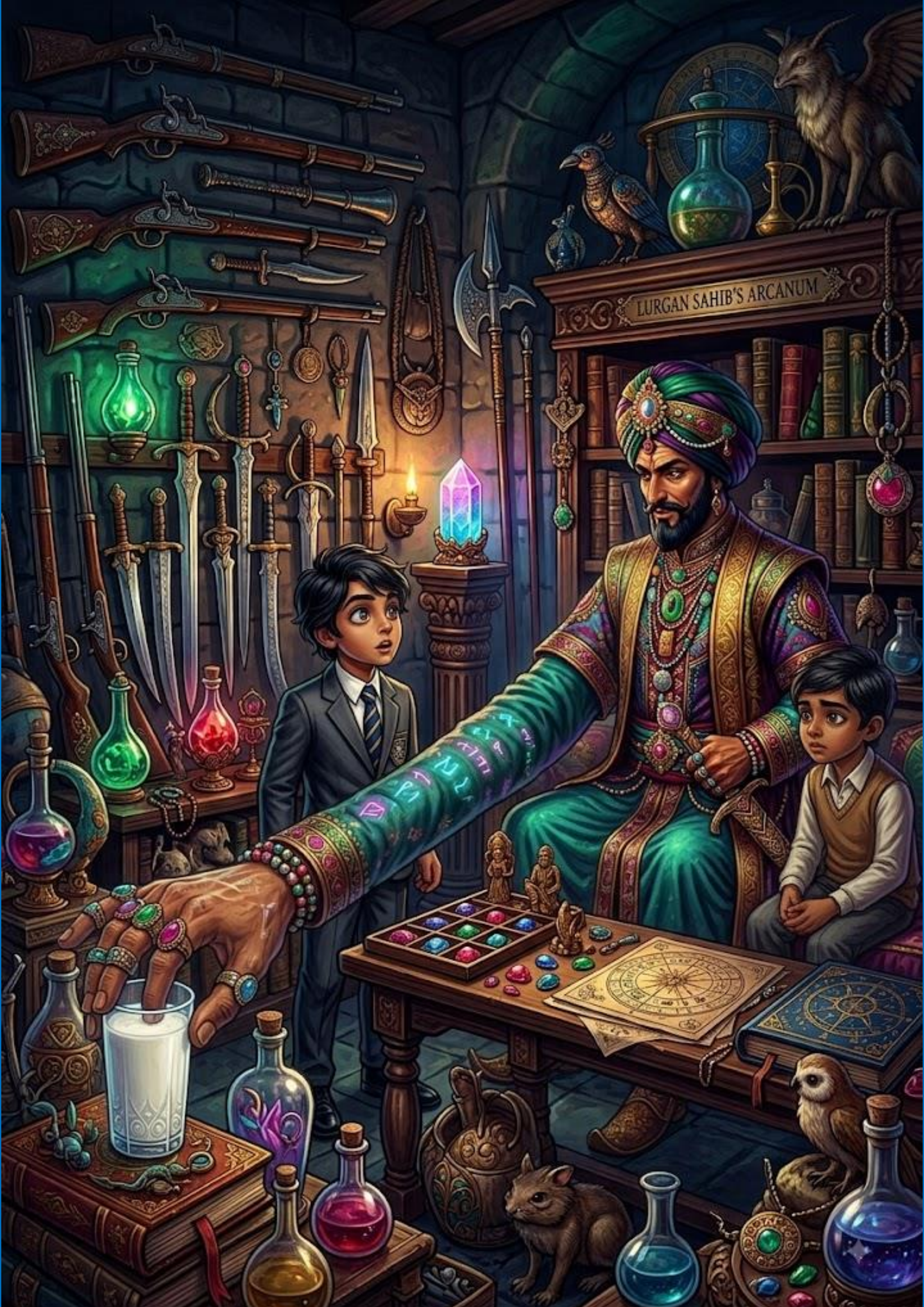
"Let it break. Throw it," he commanded. Kim threw it, and the glass crashed to the ground, shattering into numerous pieces.

Mr. Lurgan approached Kim, held him gently, and whispered, "Look at the largest piece. All the fragments of the glass are coming together." Kim genuinely felt as though the pieces were reassembling. Right at that moment, to break his mind's focus, Kim began reciting multiplication tables in English. His concentration shifted away from the glass fragments, and when Mr. Lurgan asked, "Has the glass joined back together?" Kim replied, "No, it is still broken. Was that magic?"

Mr. Lurgan answered, "No, that was not magic; it was a test, and you passed. I am pleased."

Seeing this, the other boy began weeping out of jealousy and pleaded, "Send Kim back!"

Mr. Lurgan replied, "No. He will leave only when school reopens. Now you are Kim's teacher—instruct him in various arts."


LURGAN SAHIB'S ARCANUM

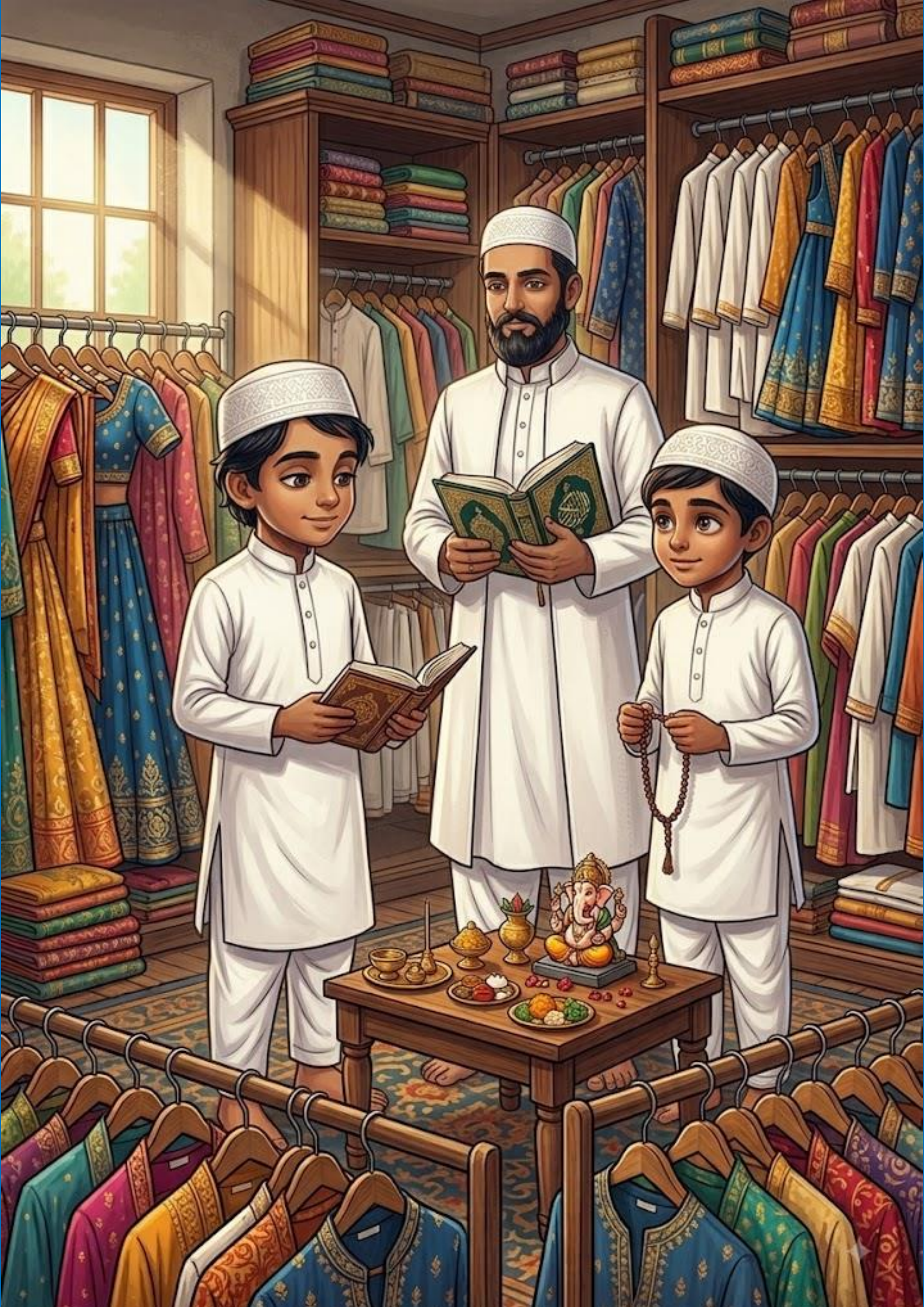
Then he instructed the boy to fetch stones of various colors to play a game with Kim. A wide assortment of colorful gems was brought out; each time, the boy glanced at them and described them in meticulous detail. When Kim failed to do the same, Mr. Lurgan asked, "Did this boy win?"

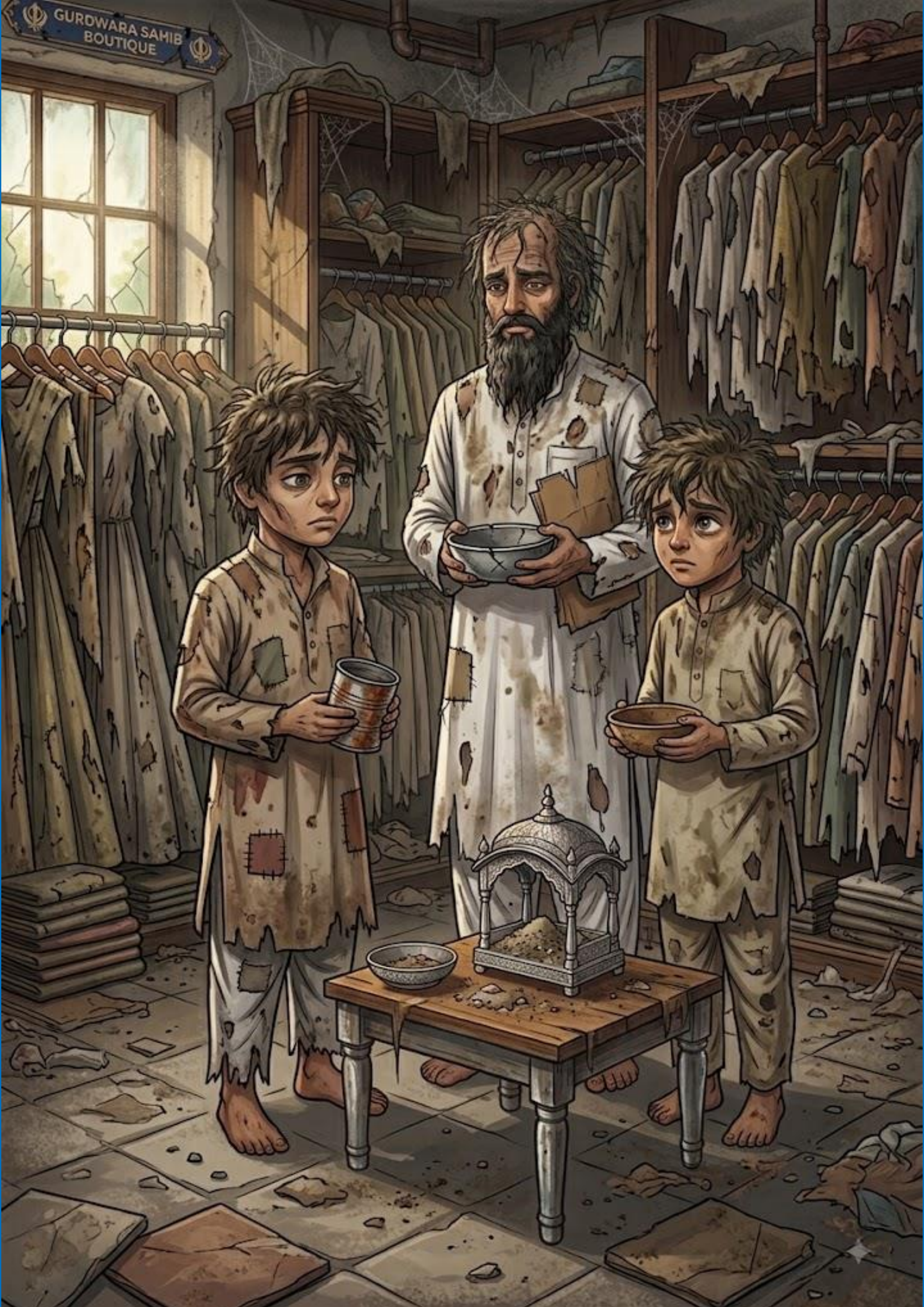
"Yes," Kim admitted.

Mr. Lurgan replied, "Very well, then he shall be your teacher to train you."

For the next ten days, Kim and the boy played this very game using multi-colored stones, pictures, and various other objects. At night, they would provide detailed descriptions of every customer who had entered the shop that day—recalling their facial features, mannerisms, and overall personality.

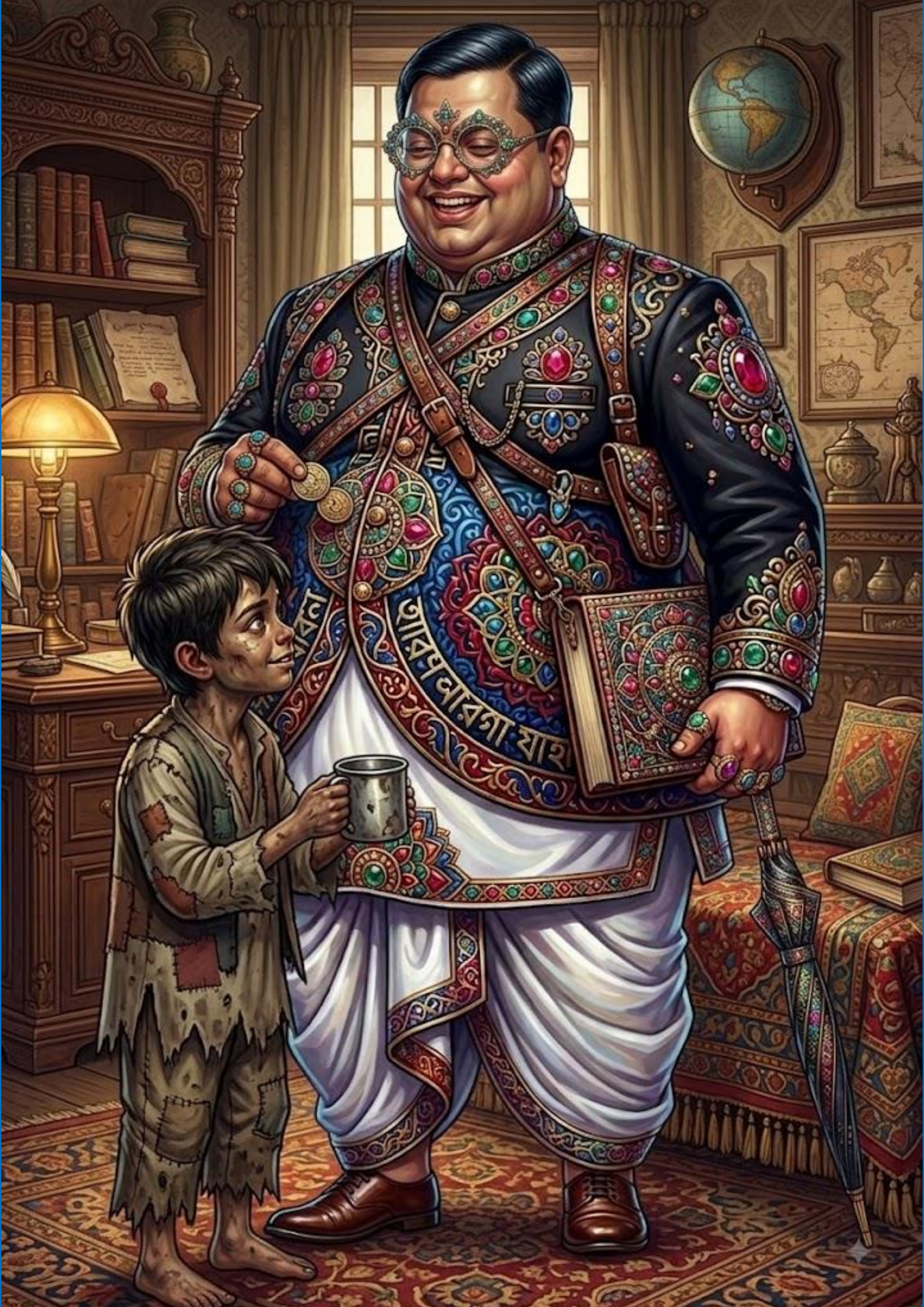
The shop was stocked with attire from every corner of India, which they would try on. Mr. Lurgan, a master of disguise and cosmetics, transformed their appearance to match each regional look—a practice Kim thoroughly relished. One day, Kim dressed as a beggar; he solicited alms first from a local Indian and then from an Englishman, deceiving both completely. Mr. Lurgan burst into laughter, thoroughly delighted by the boy's success.




GURDWARA SAHIB
BOUTIQUE

When a man named Hurree Chunder Mookerjee entered the shop, Kim begged for alms from him as well. Impressed, Hurree Chunder Mookerjee remarked that the boy had performed brilliantly and deserved complete training. Mr. Lurgan replied that Lucknow was already providing Kim with precisely that education.

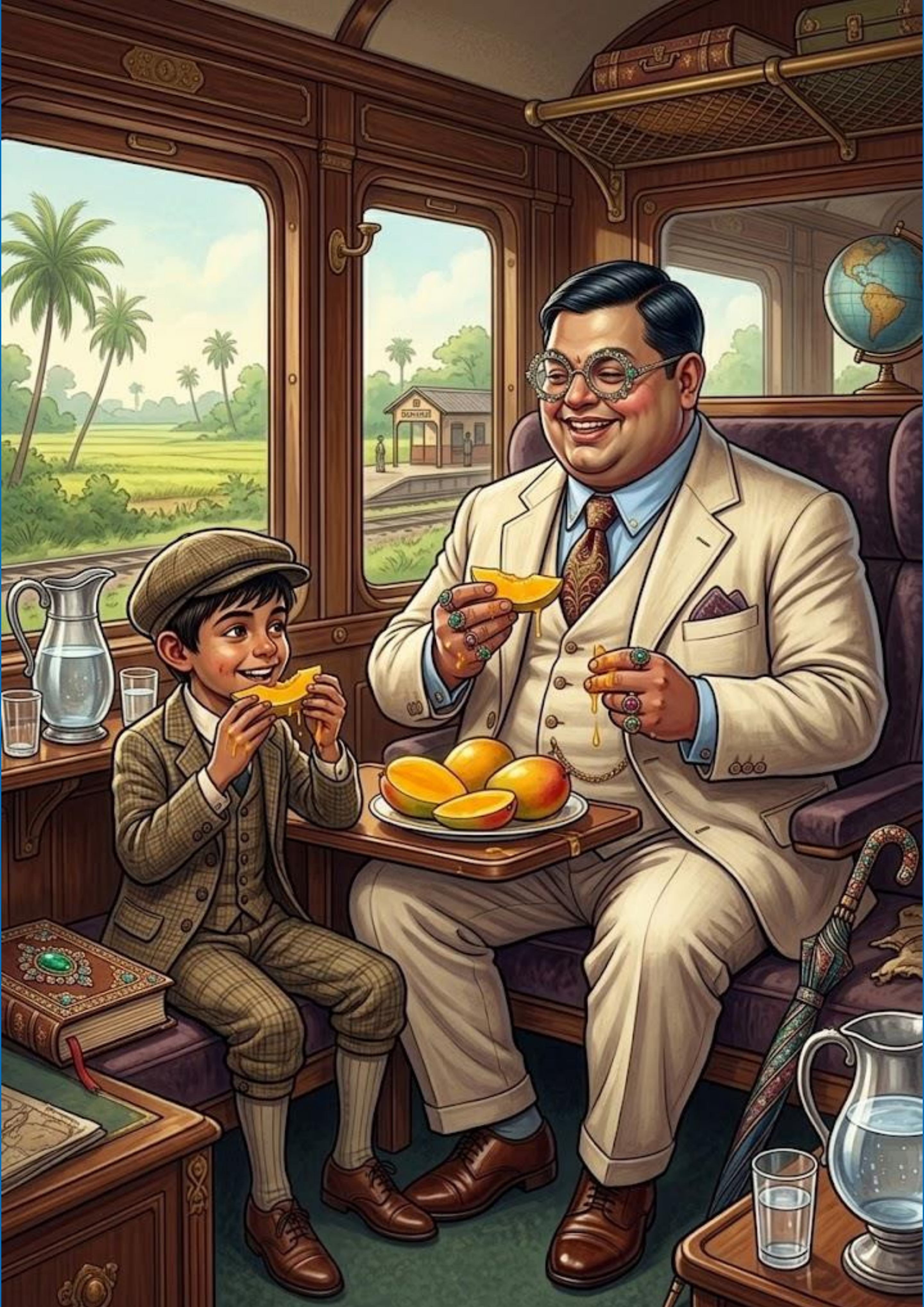
After the heavy-set, robust Hurree Chunder Mookerjee departed, Mr. Lurgan noted that while there were many secret agents, this brave Bengali was easily among the top ten.



Kim made his journey back to his Lucknow school alongside Hurree Chunder Mookerjee. Kim wondered how such a heavy-set, robust man could possibly work as a secret agent.

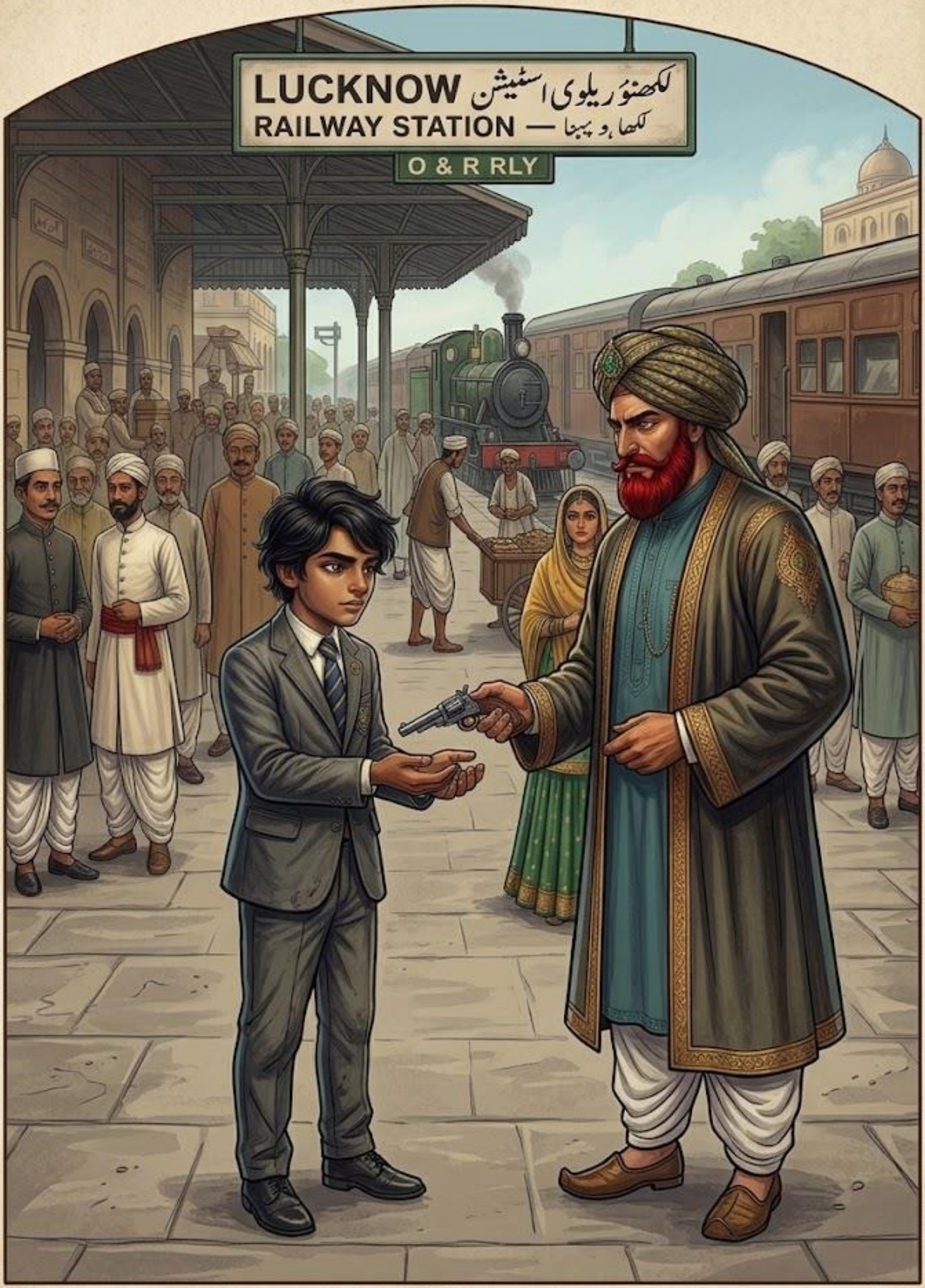
Hurree Babu advised him, "Apply yourself and study hard, Kim—perhaps one day we will be working side by side."

Taking his words to heart, Kim threw himself into his studies at school with great dedication.

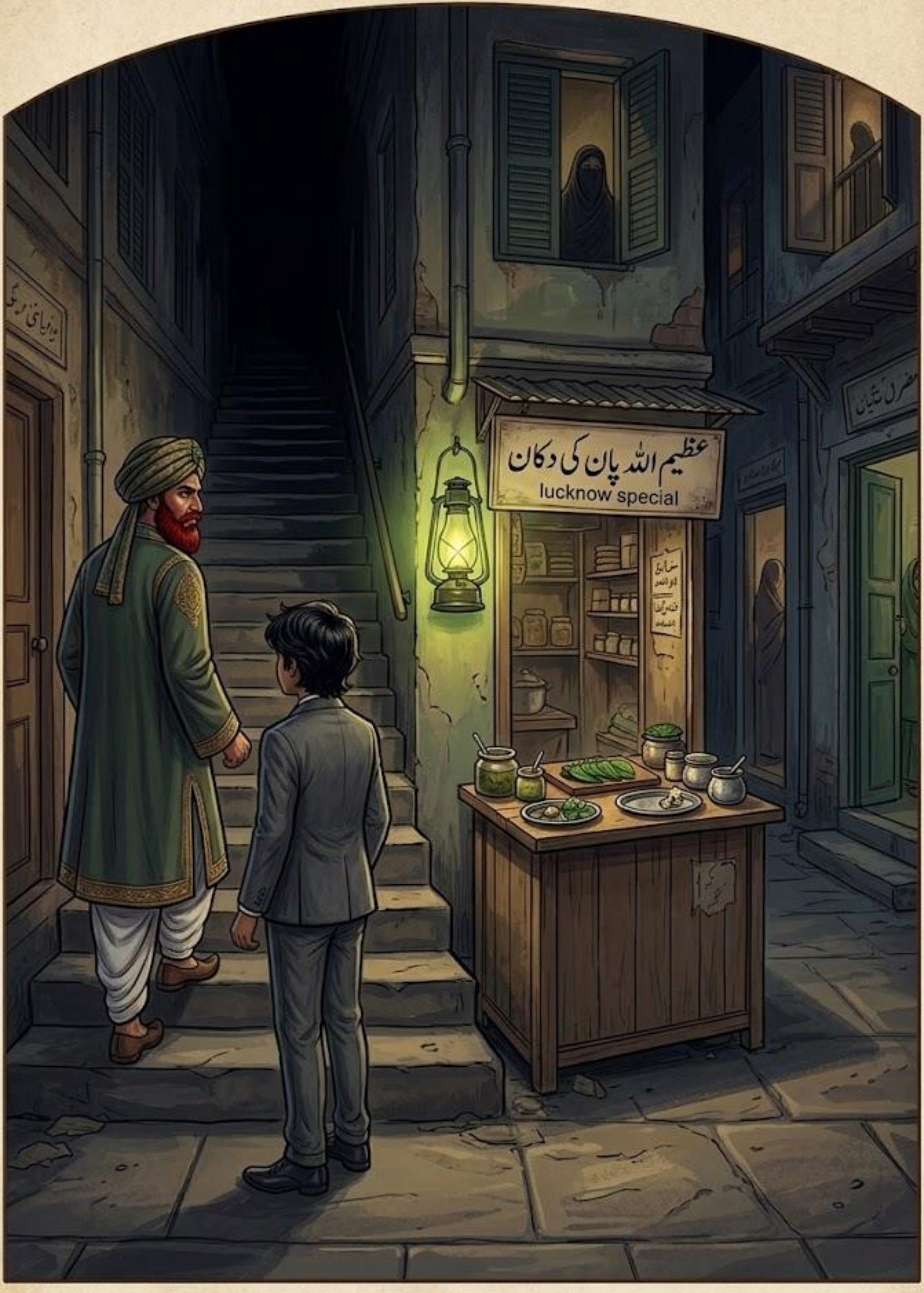


Years passed, but Kim continued to spend his summer breaks with Mahbub Ali, who believed that God had blessed Kim with sharp intellect, whereas excessive schooling would merely dull his senses and ruin his potential for the Great Game. Hurree Babu agreed with this view. Consequently, Colonel Creighton reluctantly decided it was time to put Kim to work.

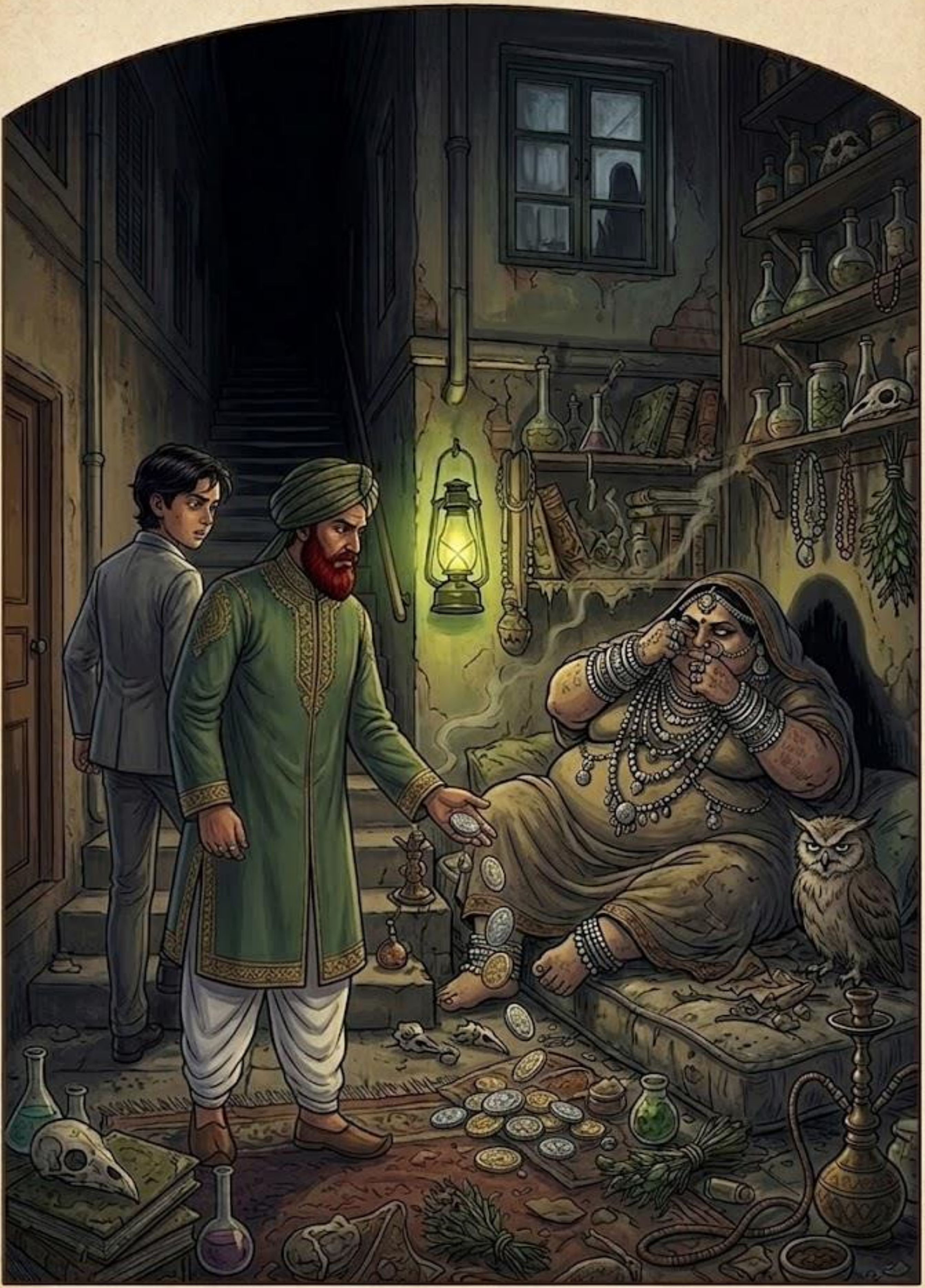
Kim was thrilled to secure a role creating maps. He met Mahbub Ali at the Lucknow Railway Station, where Mahbub briefed him in detail about the intricacies of the Great Game and what was truly taking place. By now, Kim was armed with a pistol of his own.


LUCKNOW لکھنؤ ریلوی اسٹیشن
RAILWAY STATION — لکھا و پیہا
O & R RLY

Mahbub Ali snapped angrily, "The streetlamps are already lit in the bazaars and no one will recognize you. Come with me." They began climbing the dingy, ancient staircase near Azimullah's paan shop.


عظیم اللہ پان کی دکان
lucknow special

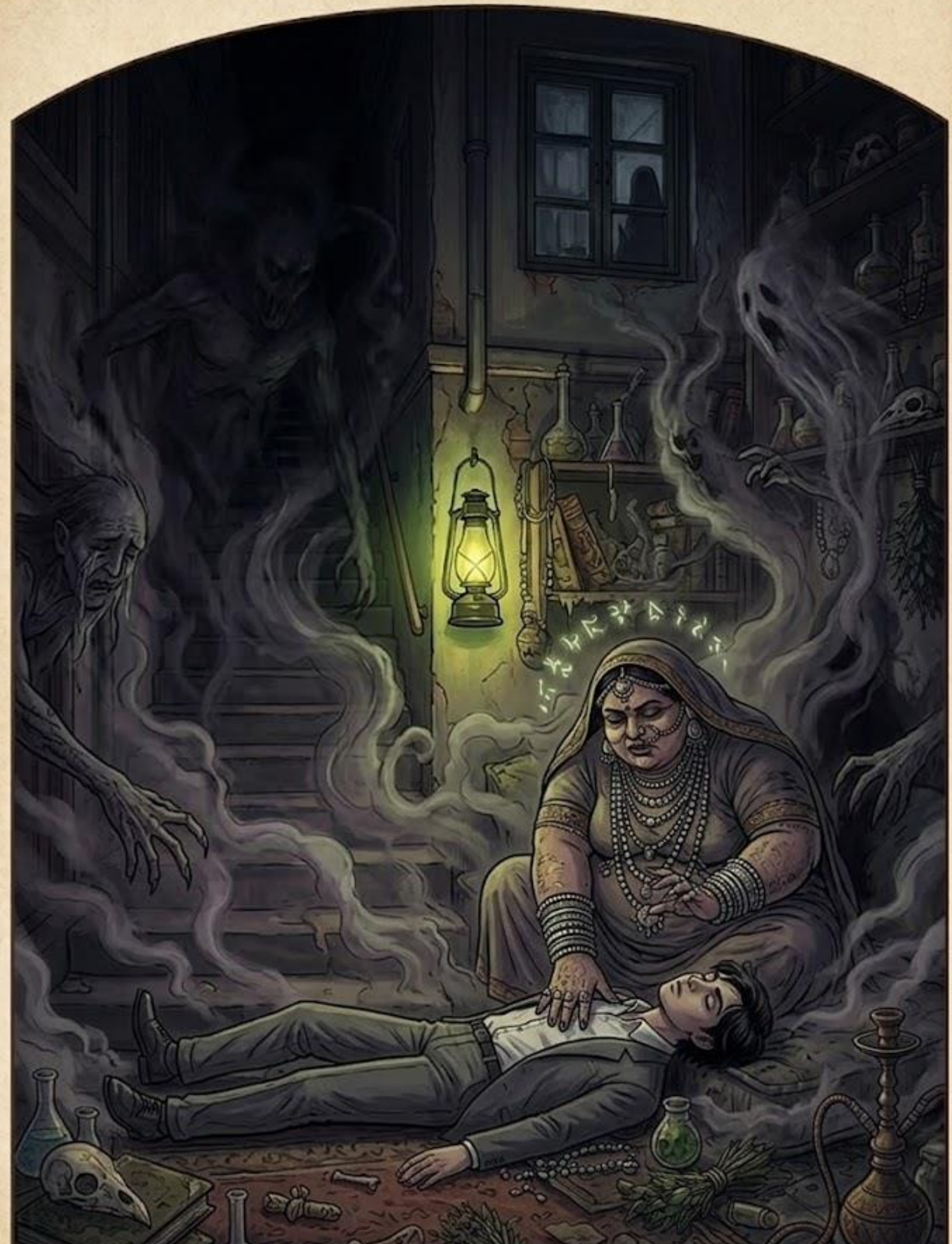
They arrived in a dark, filthy room filled with old, cluttered belongings and heavy with the stench of hookah smoke and tobacco. In a corner lay a stout woman, looking more like a bundled sack than a human being. Local jewelry adorned every part of her body—her nose, ears, neck, wrists, and arms—clanking loudly with her every movement.



Mahbub Ali told Kim, "The path you have embarked upon is fraught with danger. I have brought you to Huneefa for your protection. She is a master at altering appearances, and there is no counter to her charms. You are as dear to me as my own son, which is why I want to ensure your complete safety. Set all your belongings aside, and Huneefa, begin your work."

When the woman stretched out both hands toward Kim, he realized she was entirely blind. She remarked, "Yes, those upon whom I perform my ritual remain safe forever." As she stepped into a pitch-black inner room, Kim, sensing that magic was afoot, grew uneasy. Mahbub Ali reassured him, "Do not worry, my son; I am here with you as your protector."

Though out of Kim's sight in the adjacent room, the woman could be heard as her jewelry clanked against metal pots. She continued muttering incantations under her breath.



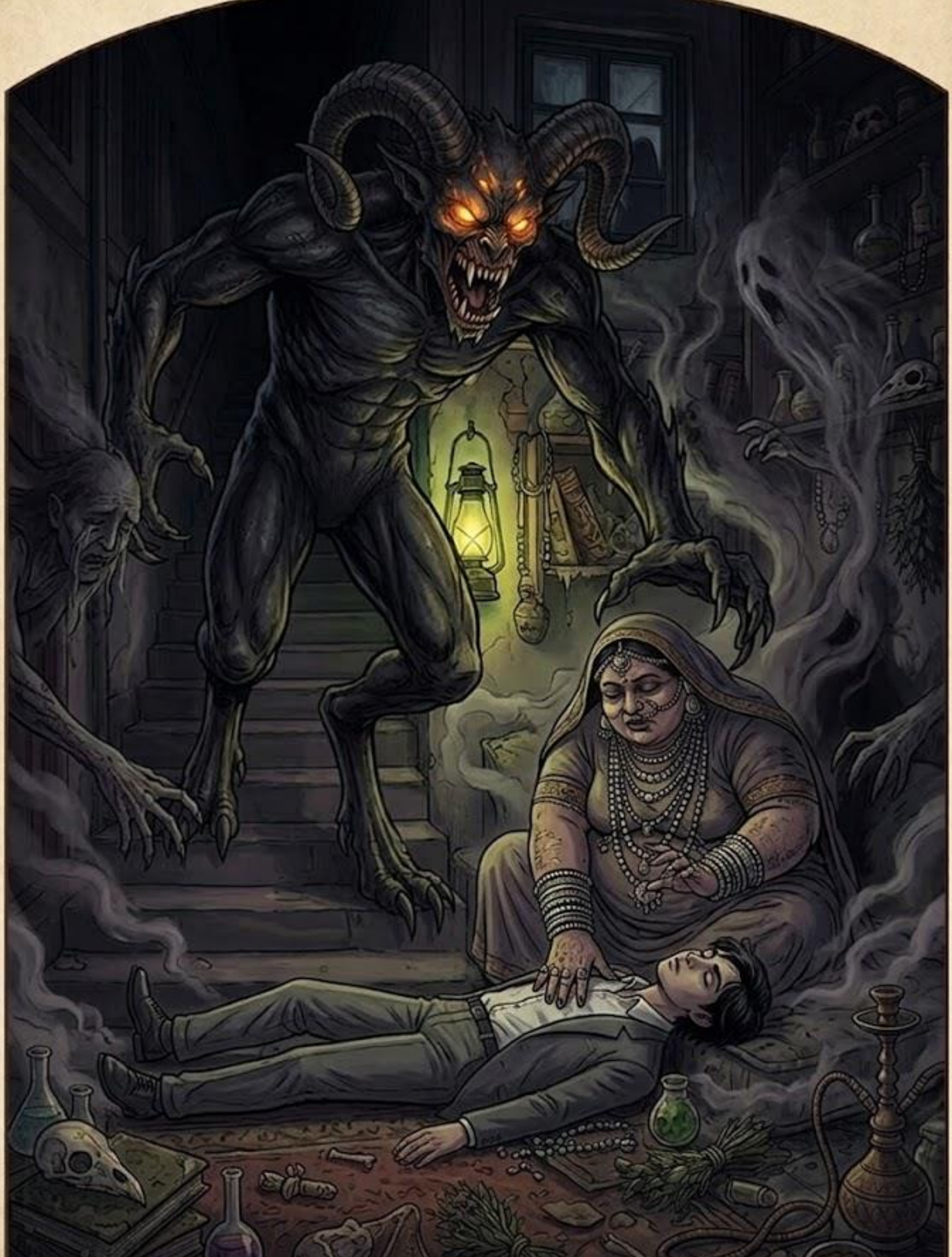
A match was struck, and dense smoke began filling the entire room, carrying an intoxicating and hypnotic fragrance. Kim drifted gradually into a stupor as the woman's chants—summoning Satan and his minions for aid—echoed in his ears like a distant whisper. She touched him with fingers that were remarkably soft yet unsettling. Mahbub Ali held him firmly until, with a faint sigh, Kim lost consciousness altogether.

Mahbub Ali remarked, "My Lord, what strength he possessed—perhaps because he is an Englishman. Had it not been for the drug's fumes, he would never have lost consciousness. Very well, Huneefa, proceed with your invocation and summoning."

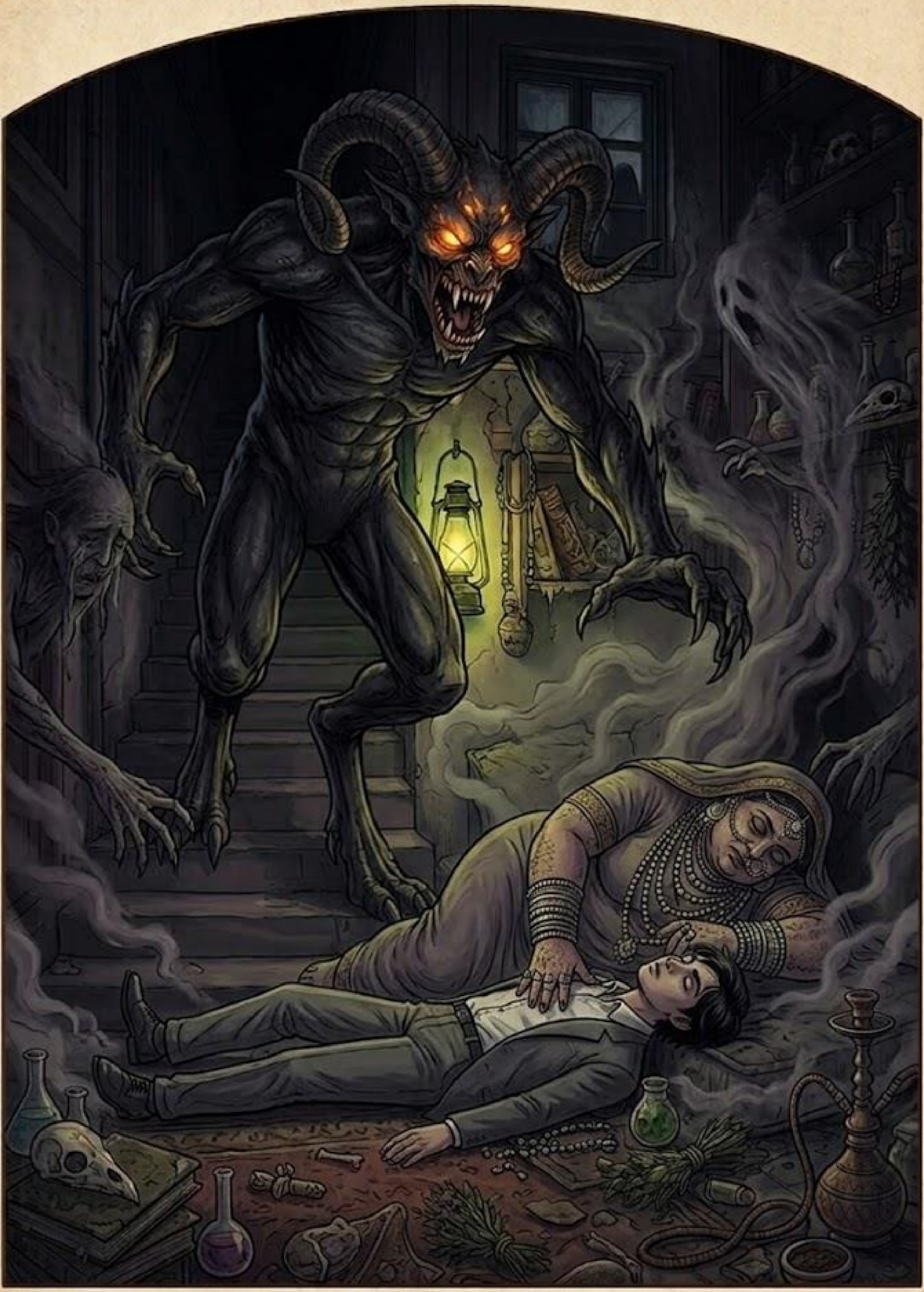
Turning her sightless eyes toward the west, the woman called out in a haunting voice, "O listening spirits, who hear with your own ears, listen to my voice and present yourselves here!" Her eerie voice reverberated throughout the dark chamber.

When the sound of Hurree Babu's nervous coughing drifted in from outside, the woman warned, "Friend, a spell is being cast; no interference will be tolerated." She continued her ritual, and it seemed as though answers were echoing back to her from the ceiling. In truth, Hurree Babu had arrived and was observing the entire scene through a window.

Lost in her trance, the woman swayed from side to side while performing the ritual over the unconscious boy. Following ancient magical rites, she invoked one demon after another to protect Kim, and it felt as though unseen forces were responding to her call.

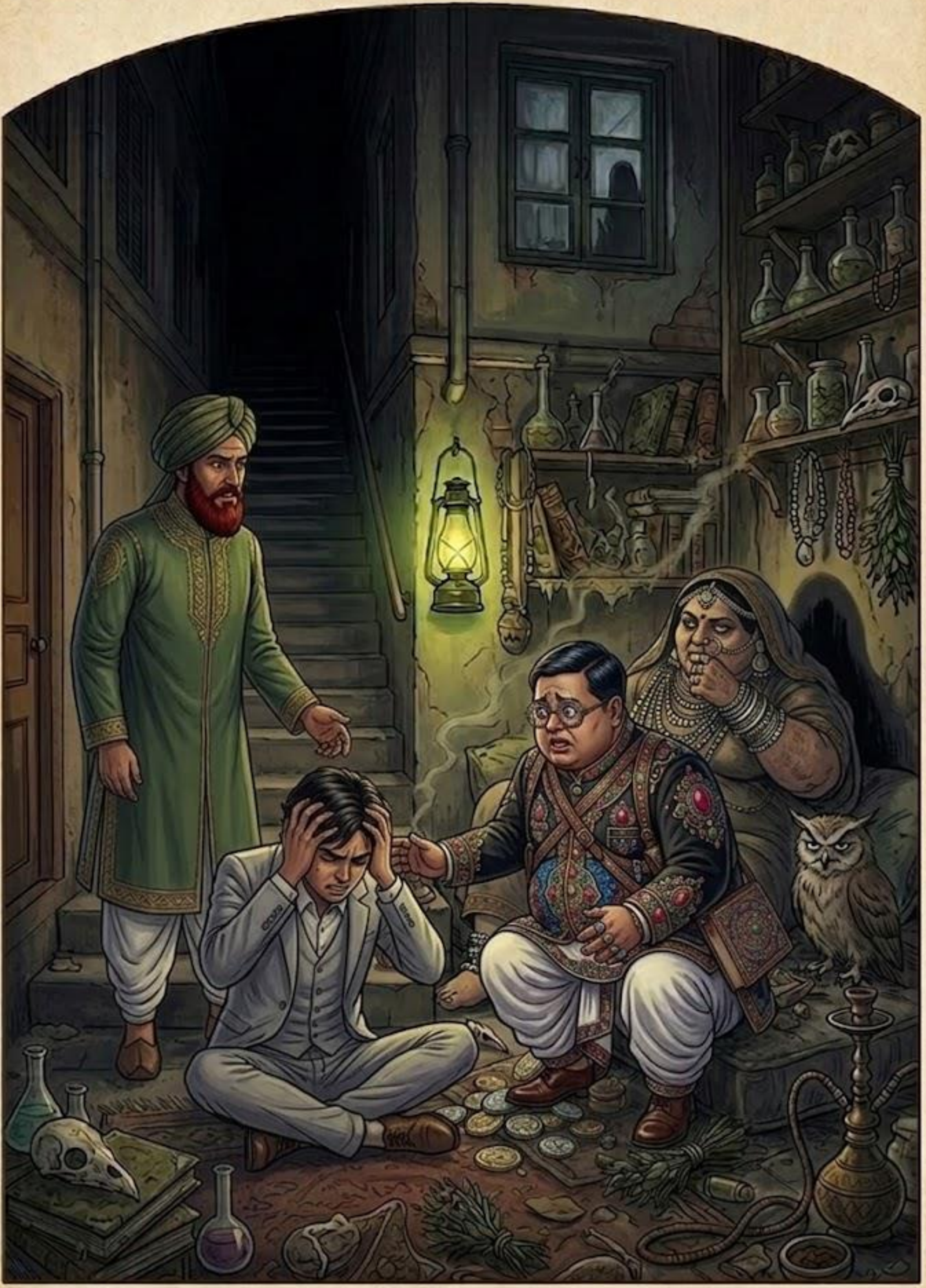


After a short while, Huneefa also fell unconscious and lay motionless beside Kim, casting a deep silence over the room.



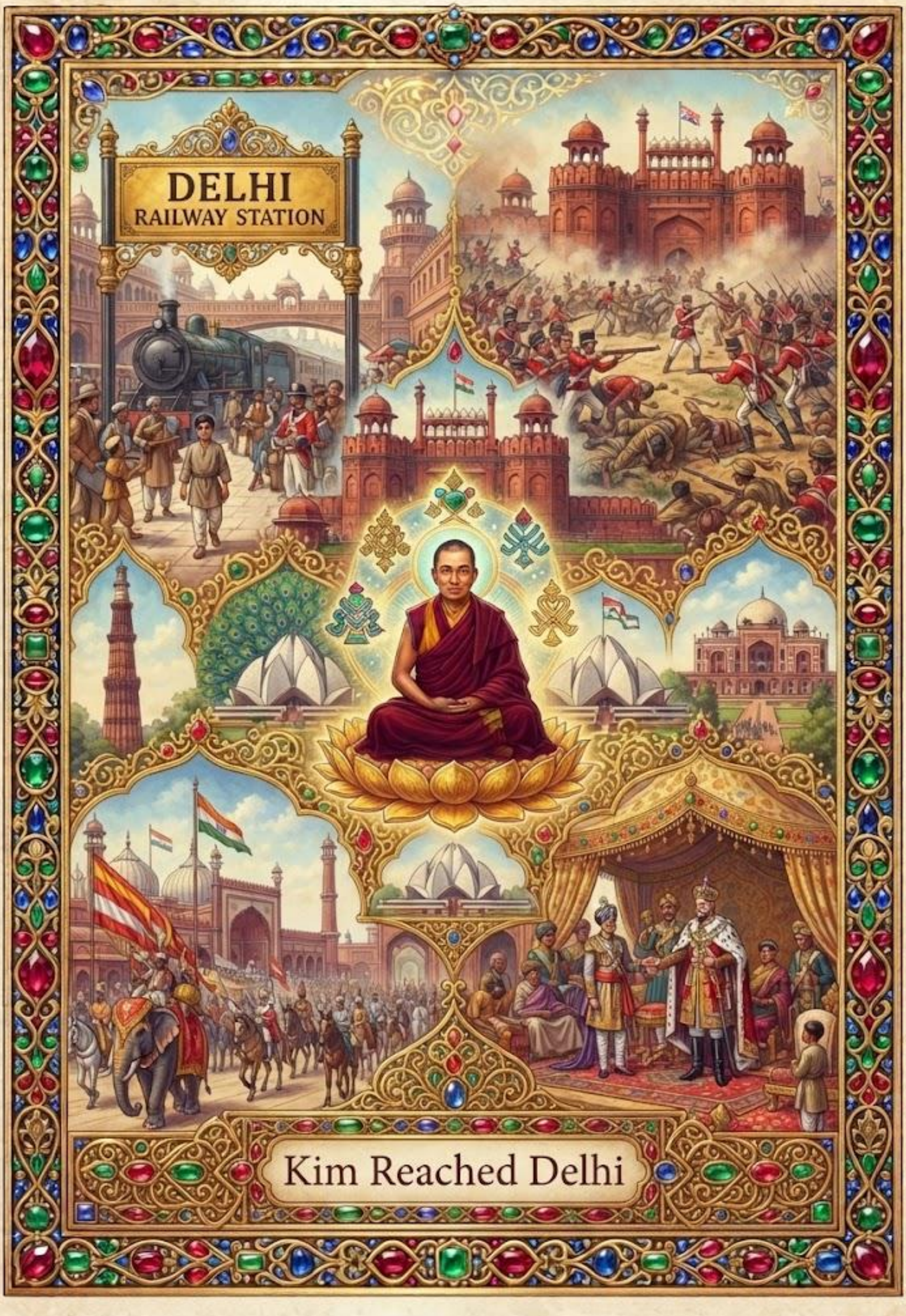
Seeing Hurree Babu so rattled, Mahbub Ali reassured him, "This was vital for Kim's protection, and Huneefa is a true master of these arts. You have no reason to be frightened at all."

Trying to steady his nerves, Hurree Babu muttered in English, "Fear belongs to things that can be seen. How absurd it is to condemn magic while investigating it, only to cower before that very same magic! Yet here we are, believing in the powers of darkness while collecting folk tales for the Royal Society."



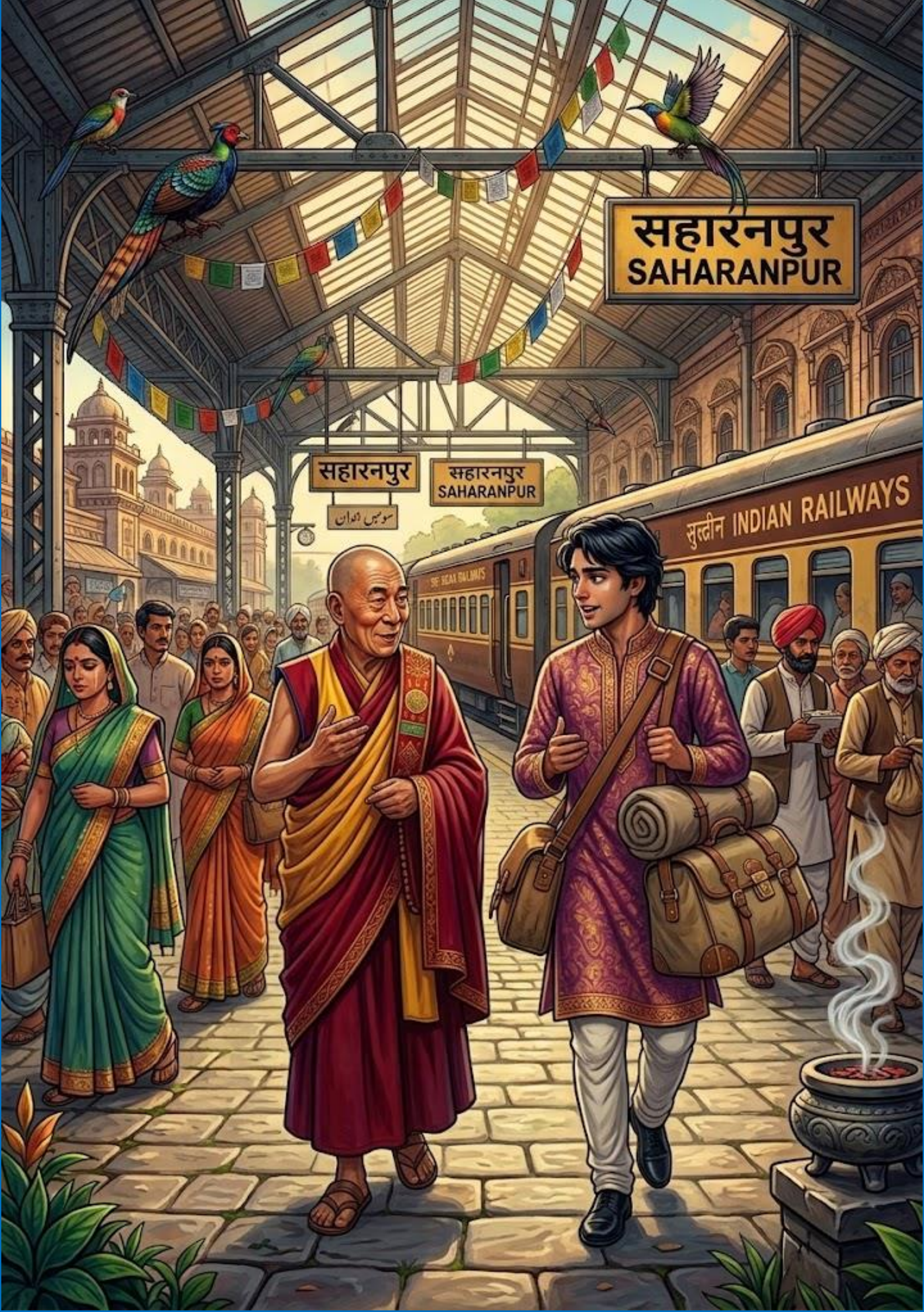
Kim then took the train to Benares, where he reunited with the lama. Falling at his feet, Kim declared, "I studied at school for three years, all thanks to your generosity."

The lama advised that they should travel north toward the hills and visit the kind, benevolent old woman from the caravan who had gone to Saharanpur. The two of them caught the train to Delhi, finding the city of Delhi to be truly magnificent.


DELHI
RAILWAY STATION

Kim Reached Delhi

And from Delhi, they reached Saharanpur.


सहारनपुर
SAHARANPUR
सहारनपुर
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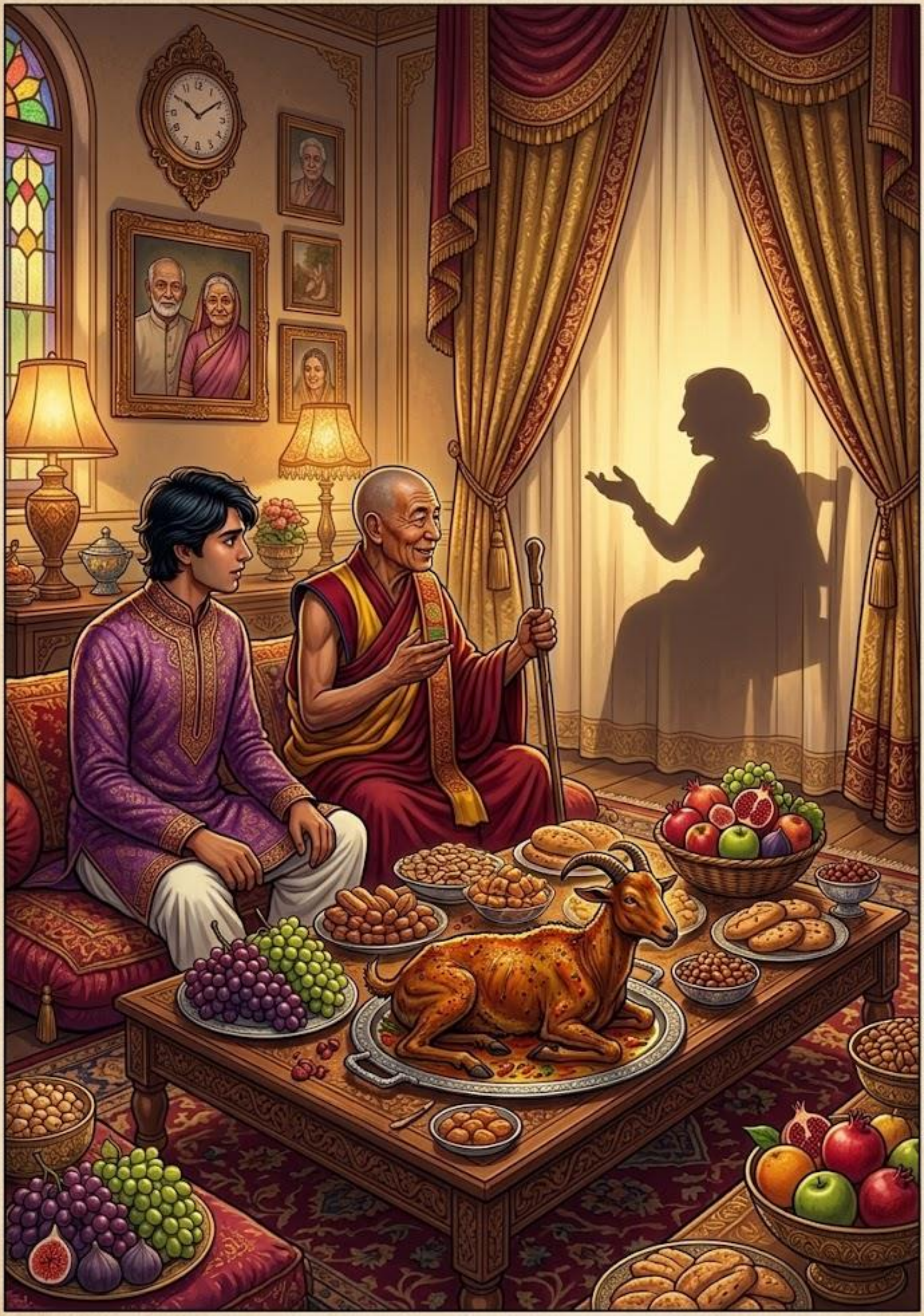
SAHARANPUR
सुल्वीन INDIAN RAILWAYS

They then set out on foot, with people offering them food at night. The lama explained the philosophy of Buddha to Kim—how humans are born, die, and are granted a new life, and how the Wheel of Life continues to turn in this way.

In the midst of her fruit orchards, the old woman received word of the lama's arrival. She immediately sent her servant to the lama with Kabul grapes and other fruits, inviting him to her home. When the lama and Kim arrived at her place, she was overjoyed and spoke about her grandsons. She requested a prayer and a protective amulet, mentioning that a physician (*hakim*) was also present, administering medicine to a sick child.



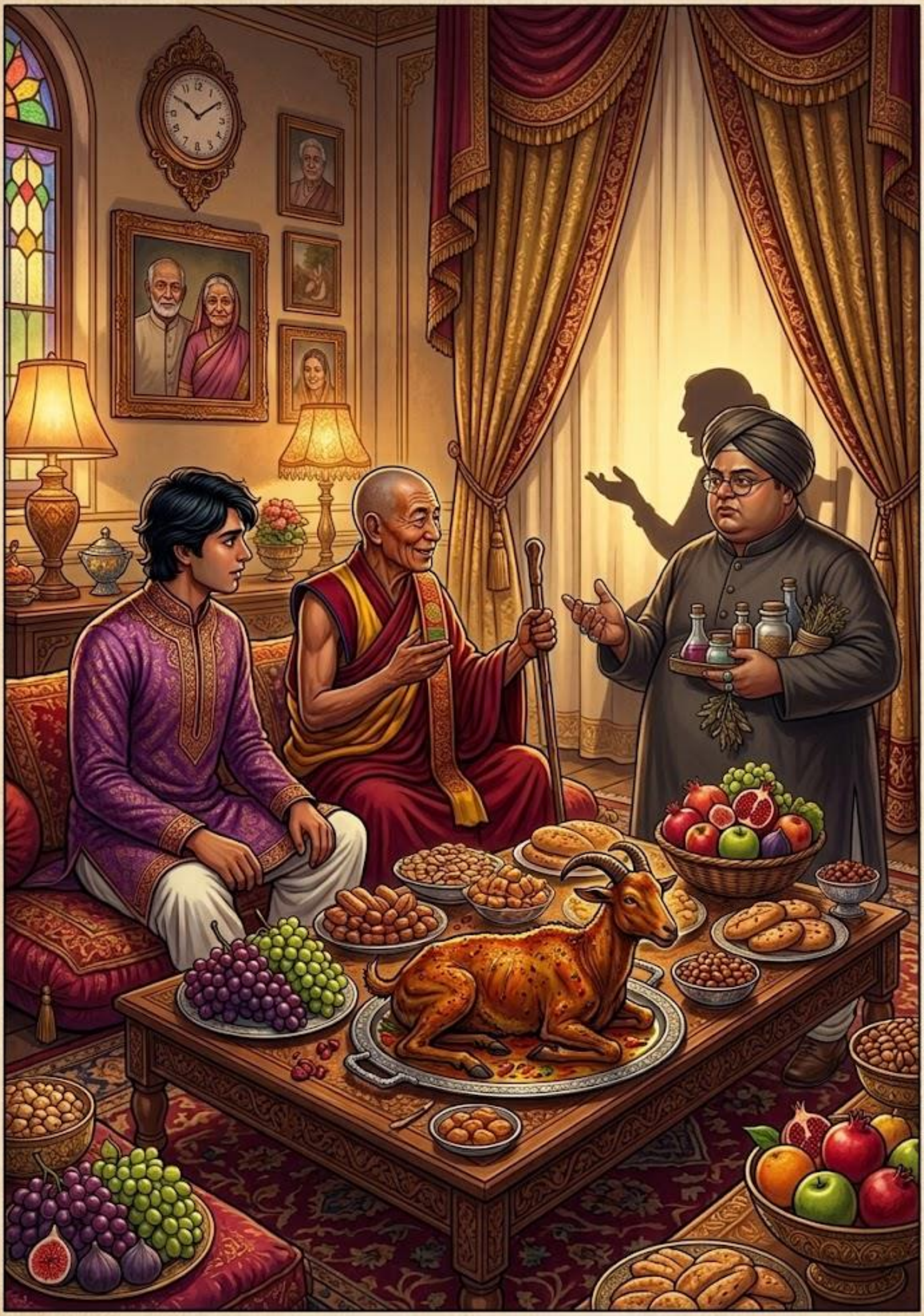
"My Maharani, who is that *hakim*?" Kim asked.

The old woman replied, "Although he travels constantly just like you, he is a fine physician. He sells valuable medicines during his journeys; my stomach pain was cured with just a single one of his pills."

The servant mentioned that after his meal, the physician was sleeping in the back quarters. Kim remarked, "Meeting and talking with him should be interesting."

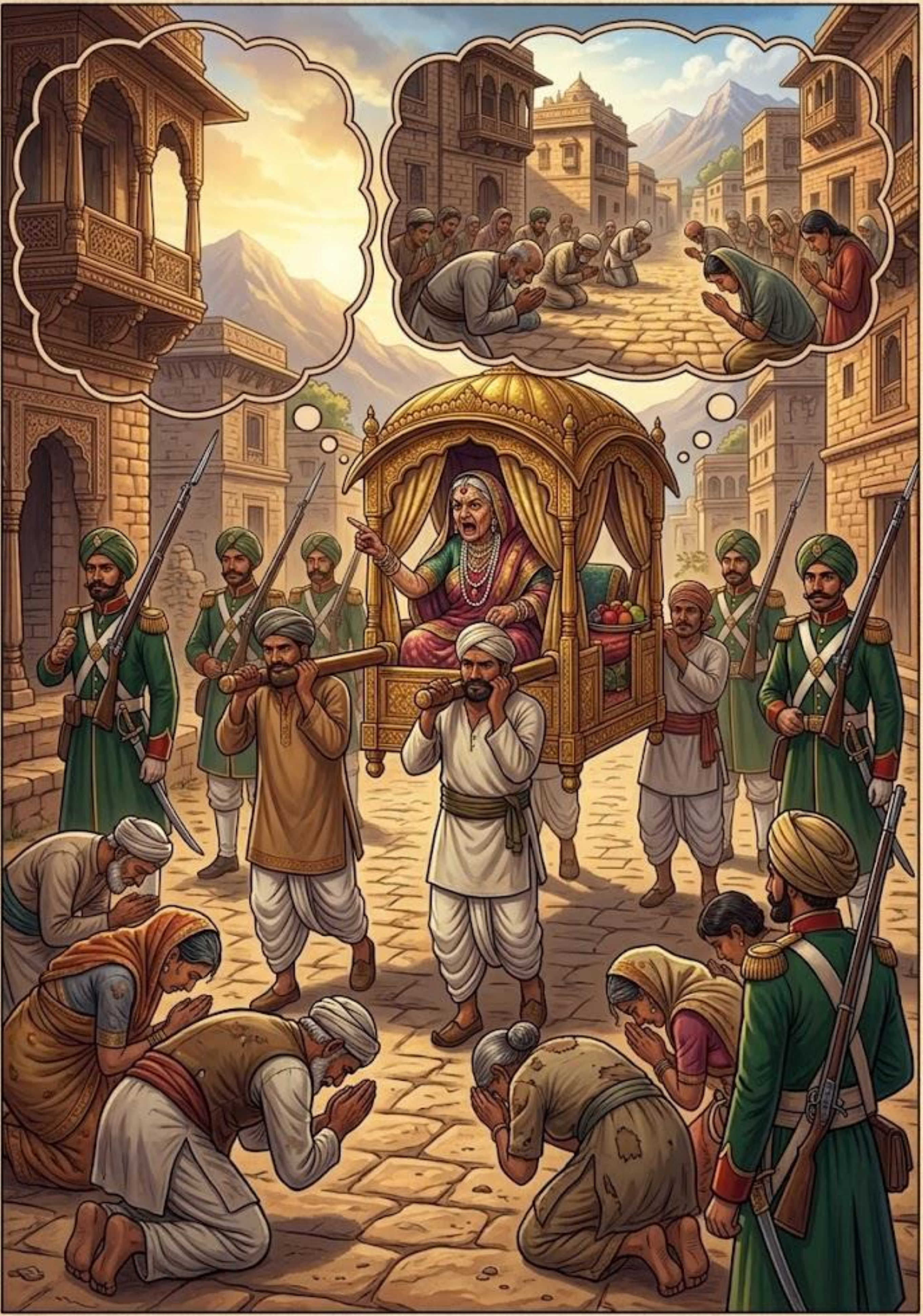
When the conversation turned to criticizing the treatments of physicians, the woman said to the lama, "Very well then, grant me a prayer and a protective amulet."

At that moment, a heavy-set man entered and said, "You people have no idea of the true importance of medicines."



Detaching herself from the argument, the old woman said, "I must go inspect my lands, as the children's father is in another city. Let the *hakim* and the young lama decide which of the two is better."

The woman, known and respected by twenty villages, then departed. The locals were well acquainted with both her sharp tongue and her generosity, and there was not a trace of theft or robbery in that region. As she set off in her palanquin, a large retinue of servants followed behind. She conducted a rigorous inspection of the area, her commanding voice carrying far and wide.



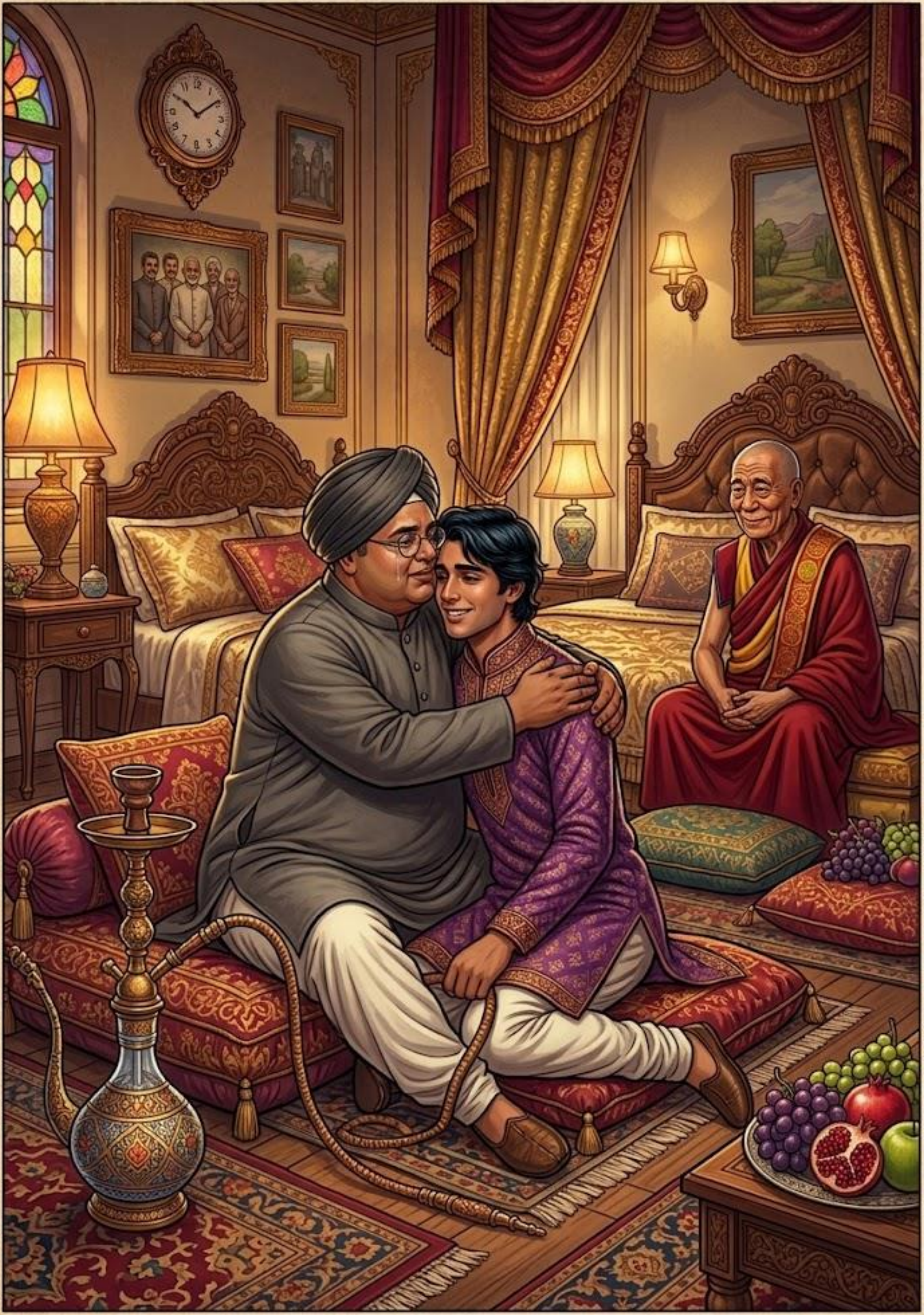
After the woman left, as the hookah was being passed around, the *hakim* spoke softly, "How are you, Mr. O'Hara? I am glad to see you."

Kim sat stunned and bewildered upon hearing his name. In truth, he had failed to recognize Hurree Babu, who was disguised as the physician.

Smoking the hookah and chewing cardamom, Hurree Babu said, "Didn't I tell you that one day when we met again, you wouldn't be able to recognize me?"

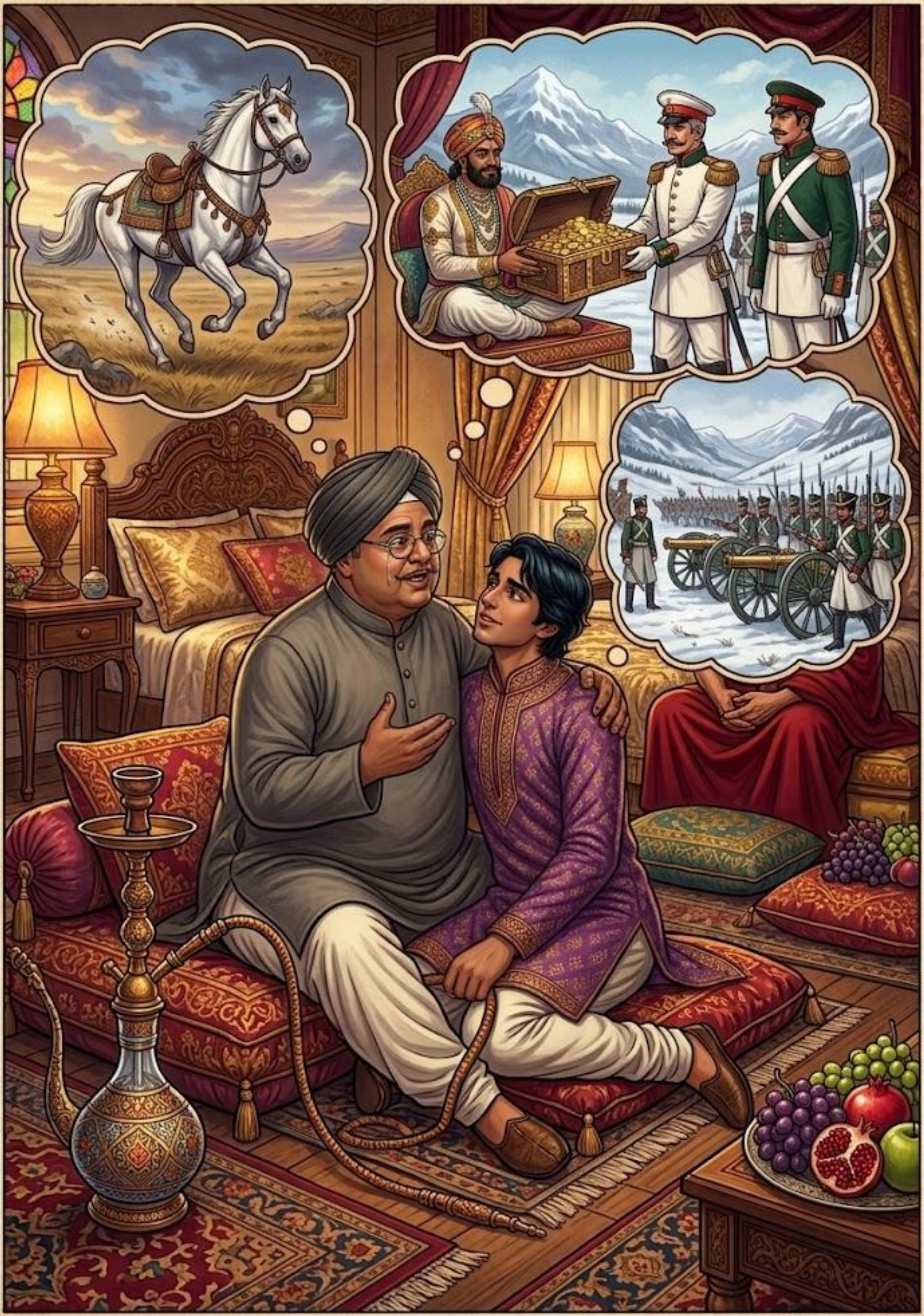
Kim exclaimed in astonishment, "Babu-ji, how come you are here?"

"Yes, that is the question," came the reply. "Shakespeare said something quite like that too, didn't he? Actually, when I received word of your magnificent graduation after completing your education, the entire department—including myself and your old companions—were thrilled. I came to congratulate you."



Pleased to hear his former companions' praise, Kim felt deeply gratified, yet he pressed, "Babu-ji, tell me the real reason, and say it in Hindi. No one comes this far just to offer congratulations."

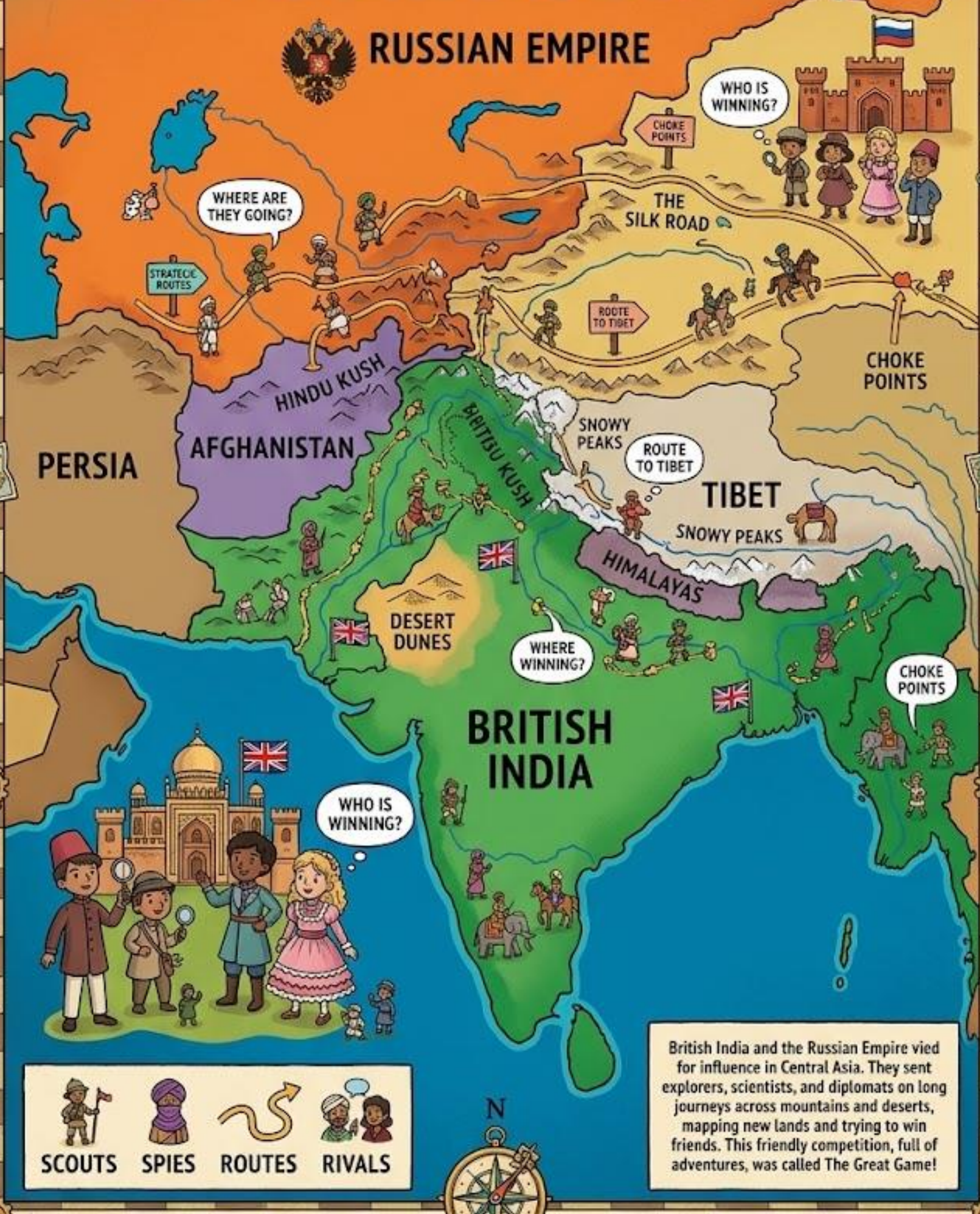
Hurree Babu replied, "Mr. O'Hara, the truth is I was looking for you, so I inquired about you and the lama from the people along the route. I also knew that this lady was bound to meet the lama. Since I am a fine doctor as well, I was waiting for you here under the pretense of treating the sick."



He explained that he was there on business regarding the Great Game. He said, "Action was taken on the information you delivered using horse terminology; troops were dispatched, but the objective was achieved without war. Consequently, due to the exorbitant costs, the troops were recalled. Yet, even after their withdrawal, the Great Game goes on.

Two local rajahs accepted money from the government to oversee the region. The government was meant to build the roads there itself, and I was present on the scene, where I realized that the rajahs had actually taken bribes and allied with the Russians. Both I and Mahbub Ali reported this news to the government. I still remember how bitterly cold it was there. Later, I was summoned south to verify the report."

THE GREAT GAME:
THE DASH ACROSS ASIA


RUSSIAN EMPIRE
WHO IS WINNING?
CHOKE POINTS
WHERE ARE THEY GOING?
THE SILK ROAD
STRATEGIC ROUTES
ROOTE TO TIBET
CHOKE POINTS
HINDU KUSH
BRITISU KUSH
SNOWY PEAKS
ROUTE TO TIBET
PERSIA
AFGHANISTAN
TIBET
SNOWY PEAKS
HIMALAYAS
DESERT DUNES
WHERE WINNING?
CHOKE POINTS
BRITISH INDIA
WHO IS WINNING?
SCOUTS
SPIES
ROUTES
RIVALS
N

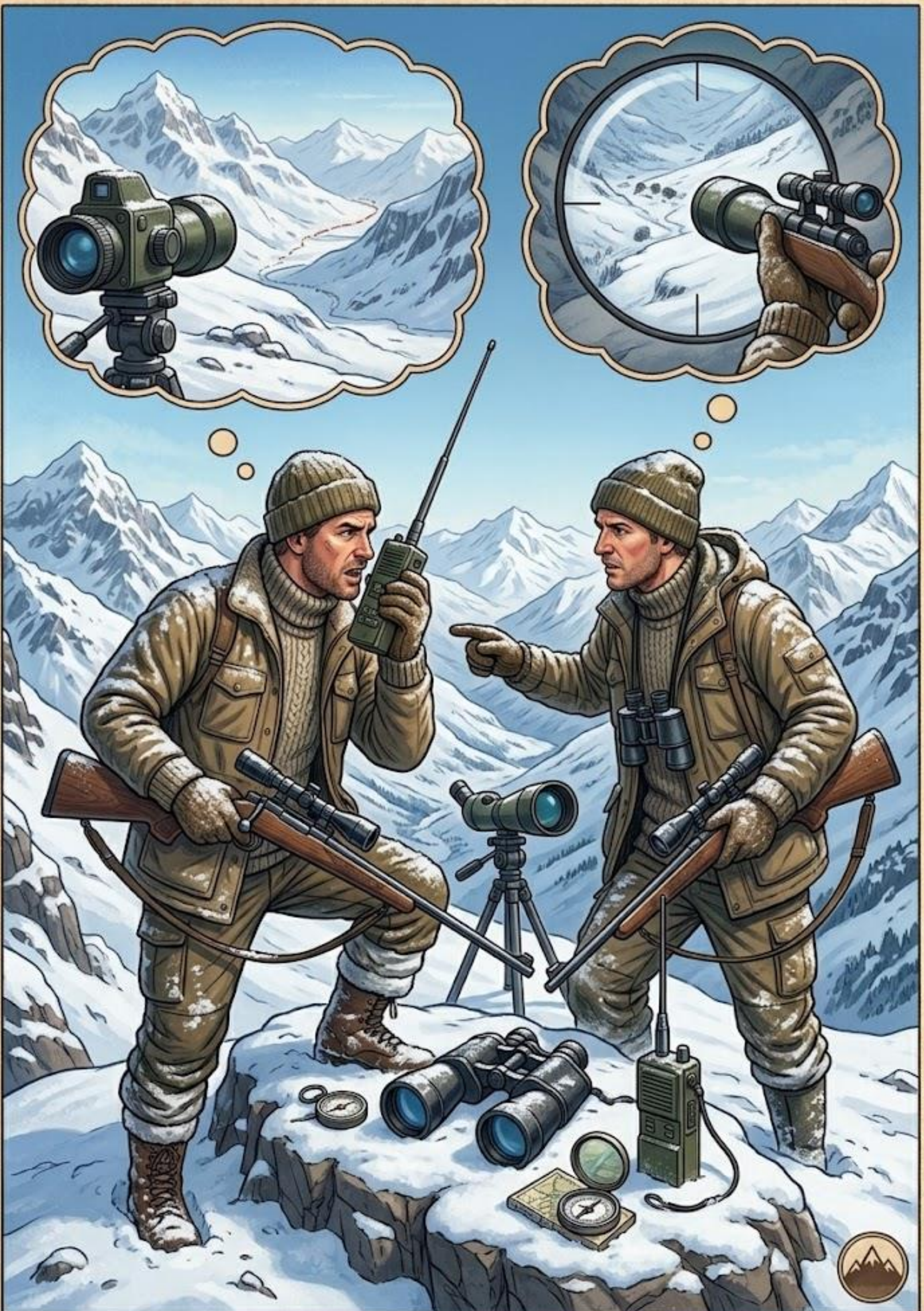
British India and the Russian Empire vied for influence in Central Asia. They sent explorers, scientists, and diplomats on long journeys across mountains and deserts, mapping new lands and trying to win friends. This friendly competition, full of adventures, was called The Great Game!

"However, two suspicious men have been spotted there once again. Disguised as hunters, they are actually Russian spies—one Russian and the other French—seeking to secure the support of local rajahs and chieftains for Russia. They are offering gifts and forging alliances with them. Spy equipment has also been seen in their possession. The rajah remains in constant contact with them and has already met them, so I have been instructed to return there and gather intelligence from the two of them. When they come close to sell skins and hides, I will mingle with them to uncover their true identities and information.

But Kim, I need you. You are free to refuse, but if you accompany me to the northern hills alongside the lama, I would be delighted and at ease."

Kim replied that the lama would be thrilled to hear about traveling to the hills. Hurree Babu said, "I will depart first, traveling a few miles ahead of you."

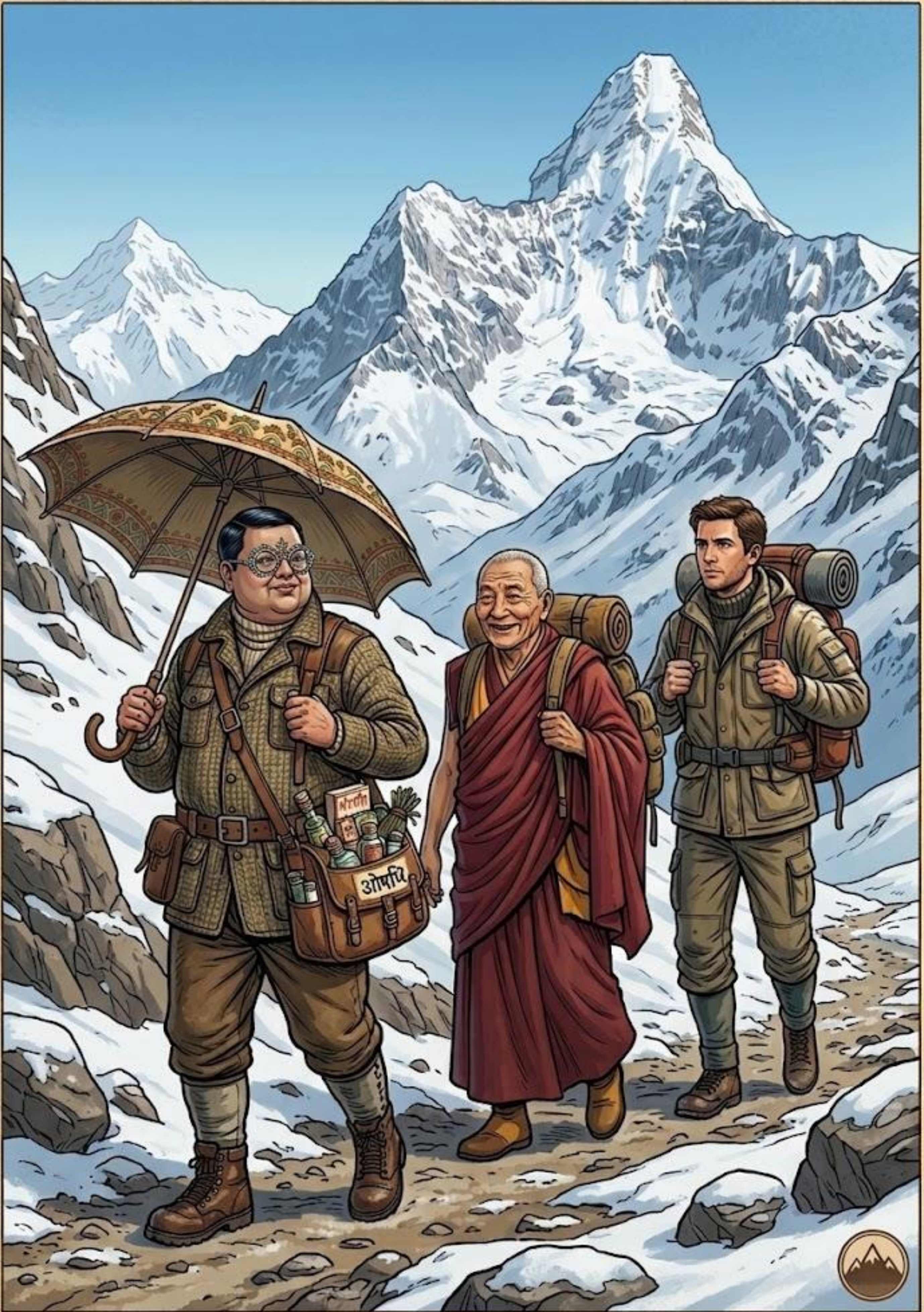
Kim lay awake all night contemplating the matter, for he desperately wanted to play his part in the Great Game himself. He thought to himself that while Mahbub Ali and Colonel Creighton had done him immense favors, the lama's kindness outweighed them all. "I will certainly track down both these spies along with their espionage equipment."



The next day, Kim praised the hills to the lama, speaking of their snow and crisp cold air. Hurree Babu also suggested to the lama that going up to the hills and breathing the open air would restore his health, so he agreed to go. Hurree Babu then set off toward the hills, equipped with his medicines and umbrella.

When the lama expressed his desire to travel to the northern hills, the old woman had a generous amount of supplies and food prepared for them. The lama remarked to Kim, "Although this woman is quite talkative, she is good-hearted and hospitable, and her hospitality is restoring my health. Once I reach the hills, I will fully recover; the *hakim* told me the very same thing. And you, Kim, friend of all the world, are with me as well. I am certain I will find my River of the Arrow."

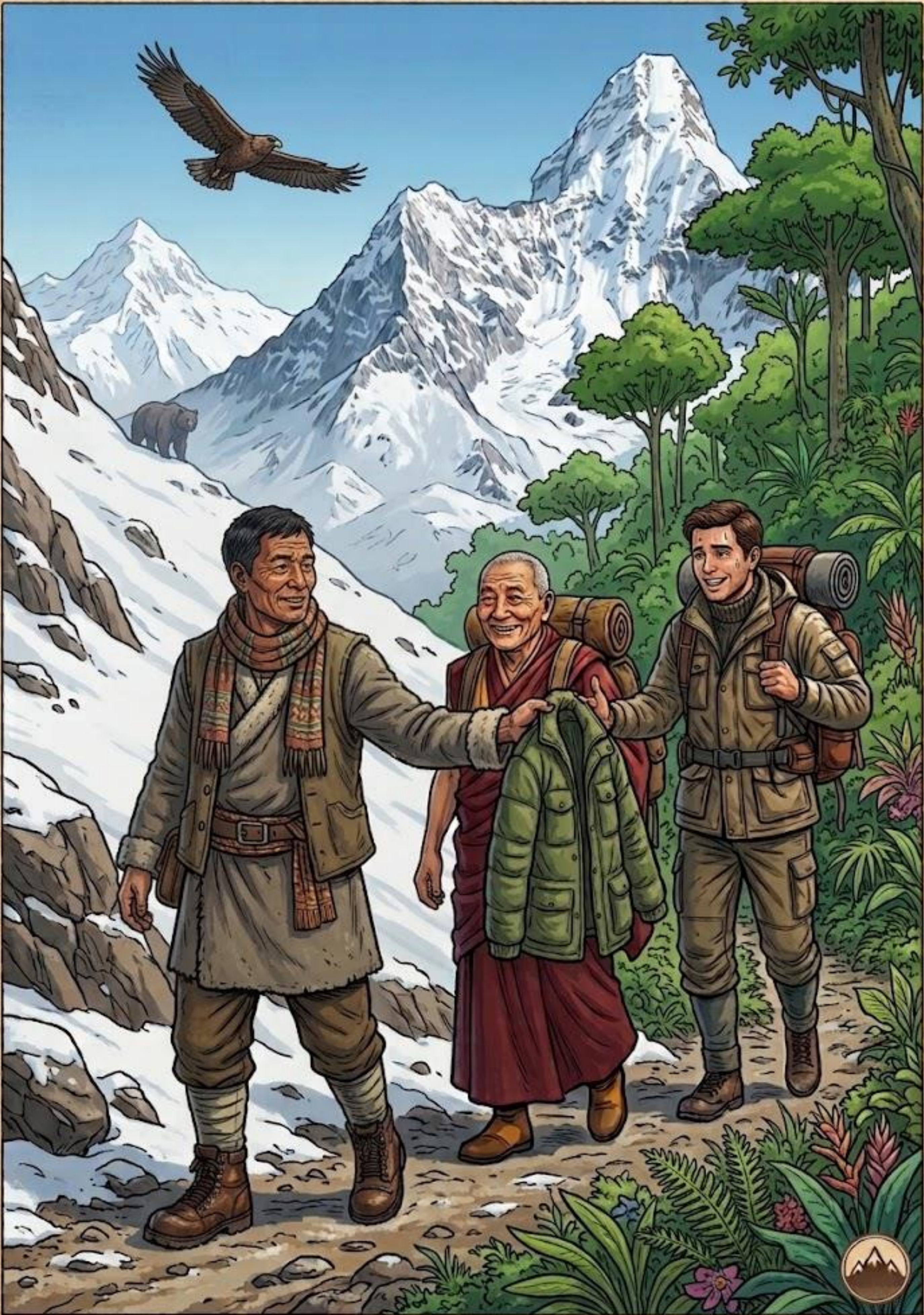
Looking contentedly toward the hills, the lama began walking in that direction. As they reached the mountains—his native terrain—he felt a newfound surge of vitality, and his pace quickened. Kim, on the other hand, being accustomed to the plains, grew exhausted walking among the hills. On one side stood the mountains, and on the other lay dense forests of trees. As they climbed higher, the cold continued to deepen.


ओपधि

When a hillman presented Kim with a thick, cheap coat as a gift, Kim felt immensely pleased, as he was in dire need of it. The lama, however, was puzzled as to why a coat was needed at all, remarking, "The true cold will hit us once we reach the heart of the mountains."

Kim replied, "The people here are wonderfully kind, the air is fresh, and the water is superb, but the food leaves much to be desired. And at night, the cold becomes intense."

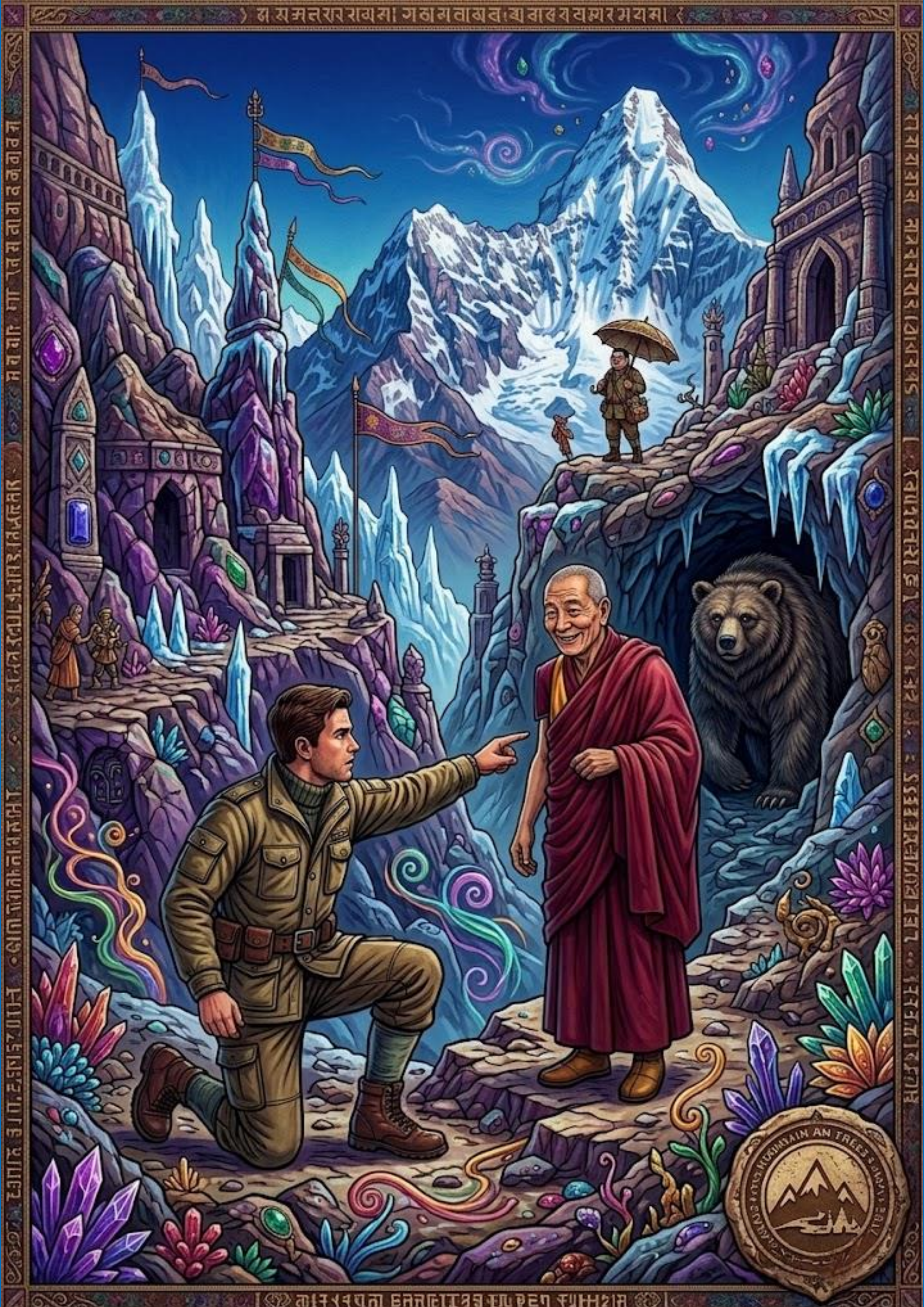
The lama answered, "Ah, but how delicious the warmth and light of the daylight feel all over again!"



Very few people were seen along the entire path. Occasionally, an eagle could be spotted flying through the air, or a bear might appear far off in the distance.

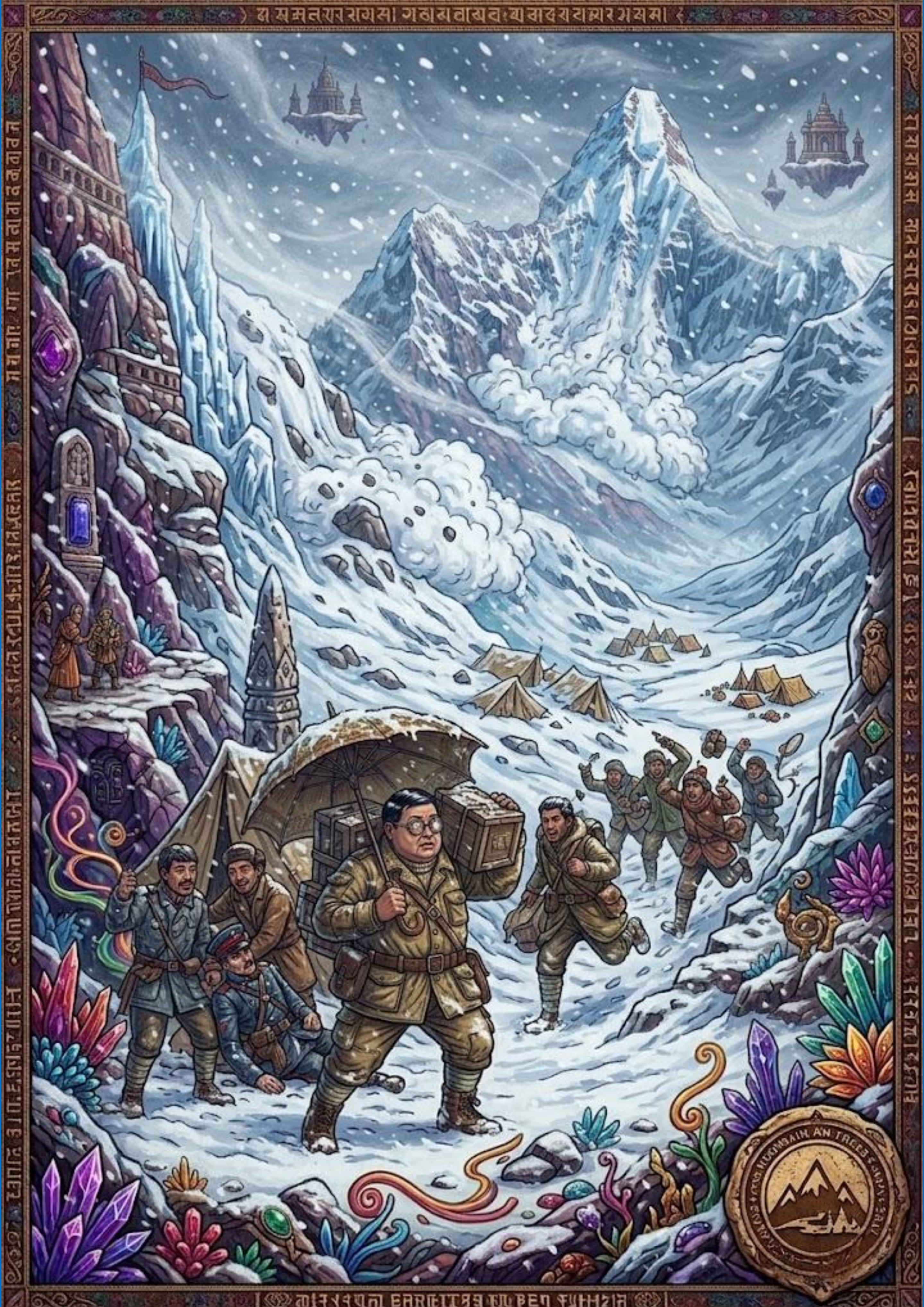
They also met up with the *hakim*, who was treating people along the way. Kim would venture into the forest with him to gather medicinal herbs and talk. Hurree Babu remarked, "Mr. O'Hara, I do not know when I will encounter those two spies, but keep your eye on my umbrella, which you will be able to spot from afar. I am worrying whether they might have already dispatched their documents back to Russia."

The two separated, yet Kim could still spot Hurree Babu's umbrella from a distance.



As they traveled, they reached great heights—into the heart of the true mountains. The lama remarked that these peaks felt like his home. Here, the snow remained frozen all year round. Far below, lush green forests stretched for miles, and beneath them lay a village with crops and animals. Hurree Babu had already arrived, scanning the landscape through his binoculars, and had spotted the strangers' camp appearing as tiny specks in the distance.

When he reached them after a storm, all the local workers had abandoned the two spies. They were convinced that an evil omen might bring them harm, especially after a bolt of lightning struck and scorched a tree.

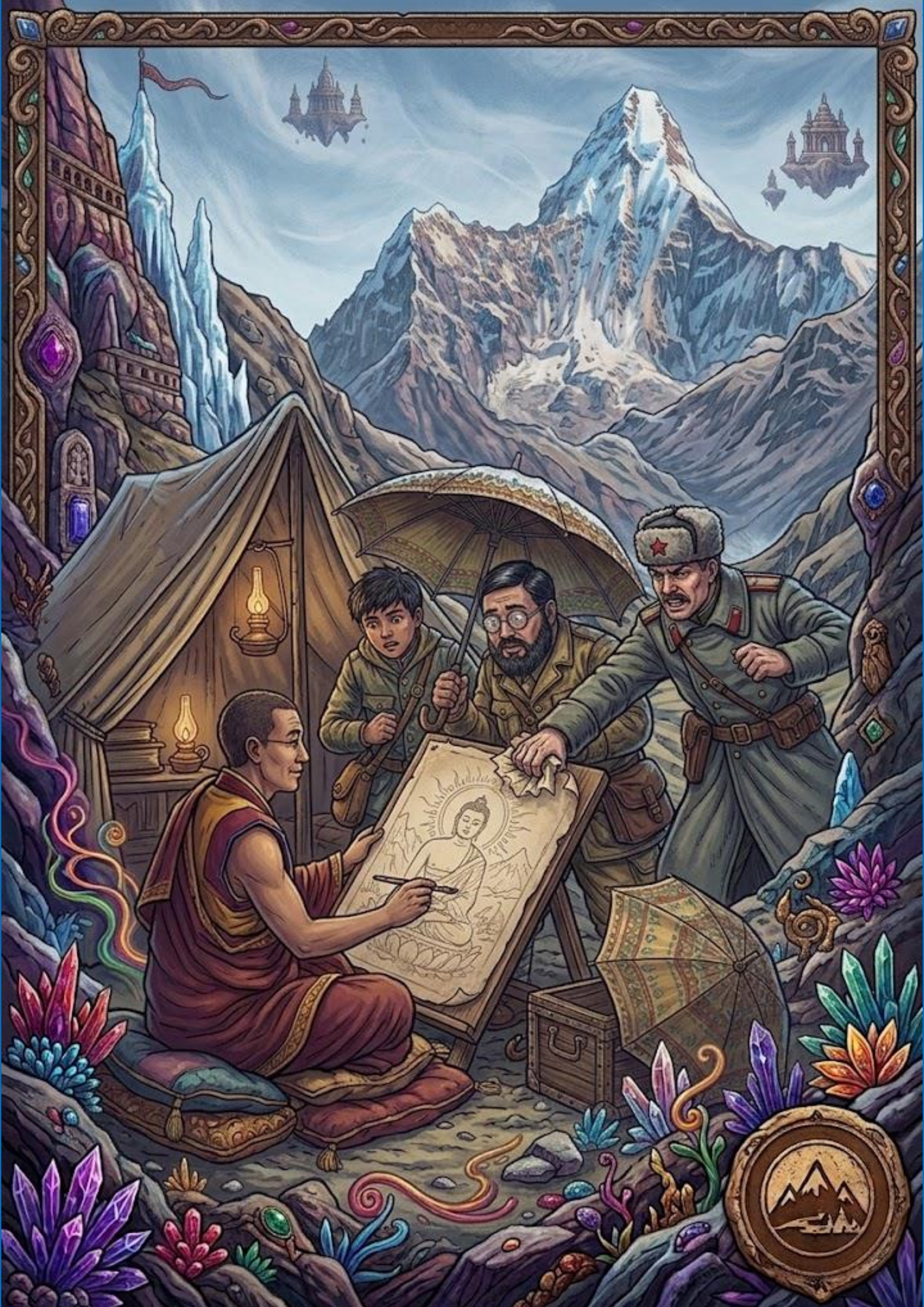


Hurree Babu came to the strangers' aid and persuaded the locals to return to work by offering them money. He introduced himself as an agent of the Rajah of Rampur. As their journey commenced, Hurree Babu engaged them in lively conversation, all while keeping a close watch on a large chest containing maps and valuable documents.

Following the umbrella, Kim and the lama also caught up with them. In private, Kim asked Hurree Babu what he should do, to which he replied, "Just wait and watch. Maps and valuable documents are kept inside that chest. I have already seen a letter written by a rajah in there, though I haven't been able to identify which rajah yet, as they guard it very fiercely. The good news, however, is that nothing has been sent back to Russia so far. Listen, if anything happens to me, you at least ought to know where the valuable documents are."

The lama was explaining Buddhist philosophy to Kim using a sacred drawing he had created himself. When the spies expressed interest in the artwork, the lama tried to explain its meaning to them. However, one of them interrupted, saying he couldn't understand what the lama was saying and wanted to buy the picture instead, asking to find out how much he would sell it for.

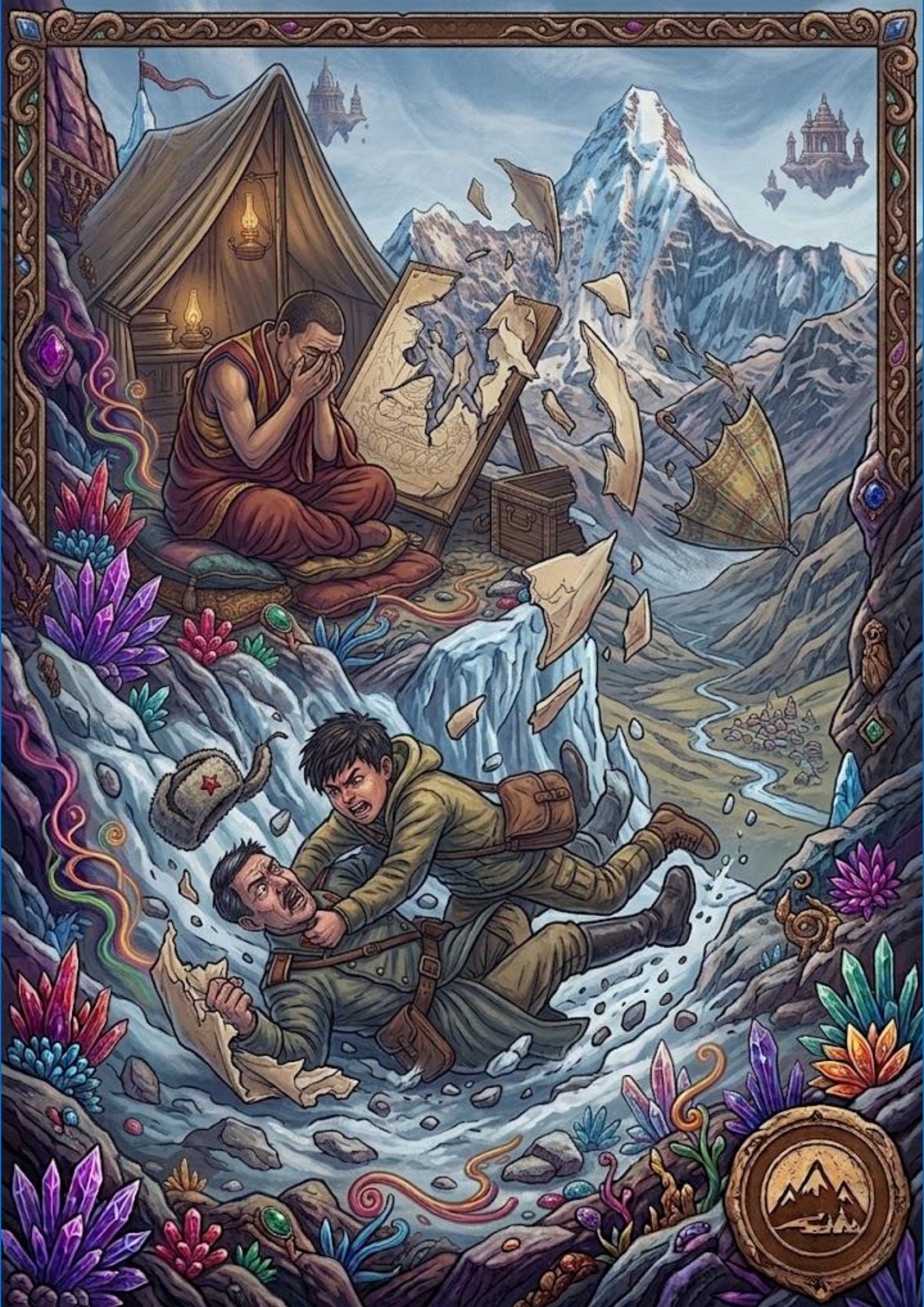
After asking the lama, Hurree Babu replied that he would not sell it. Beyond being a notable figure in the region, the lama was a fine artist who would never sell his painting to someone who did not appreciate its true value. Believing that the lama was merely trying to drive up the price, the Russian playfully pulled out some money and attempted to snatch the picture away from him.



And it tore. Seeing this, some of the hill coolies who were followers of the Buddha panicked in utter shock.

Foreseeing the outbreak of a violent fight, Hurree Babu grew deeply anxious and cried out to the spies, "Sir! Sir! Please do not strike a holy man!" Before Kim could stop him, the Russian struck the lama across the face with all his force.

In the very next instant, a enraged Kim seized him by the throat, and the two went tumbling head over heels down the hillside. The lama collapsed onto the ground in sheer distress, while all the terrified coolies grabbed their loads and fled hastily up the slope. Striking a holy man like the lama was a horrific sin, and they wanted to get as far away from that place as possible.



The Frenchman considered taking the lama hostage at gunpoint, but the hill folk—who possess exceptional aim—began raining stones down upon him. As the Frenchman fled, a Buddhist coolie helped support the lama, leading him up toward higher ground. Distraught over the loss of their valuable belongings, the Frenchman began firing blindly into the dimming light.

Hurree Babu quietly slipped over to Kim and whispered, "There are valuable documents inside this baggage. Go join the coolies." He then shouted to the Frenchman, "Stop firing! Otherwise, the coolies will come down and kill us all!"

As Kim moved swiftly, a bullet whizzed right past him. Reaching the lama and the coolies, both he and the lama asked after each other's well-being. The lama insisted that they ought to resume their journey. Meanwhile, one of the coolies declared, "We now have four of their guns. They struck you, and we will take revenge; we will punish them for mistreating a holy man!" All the coolies chimed in together, eager for vengeance.

However, the lama said, "They struck me, and I have forgiven them. You will obey my command and now begin the journey toward the nearest village."

When the coolies remained adamant about punishing the spies, the lama stood up and said, "Did you not hear my command? If you disobey, you will begin your next life reincarnated as a rat or a snake." The coolie fell to his knees, begging for forgiveness.

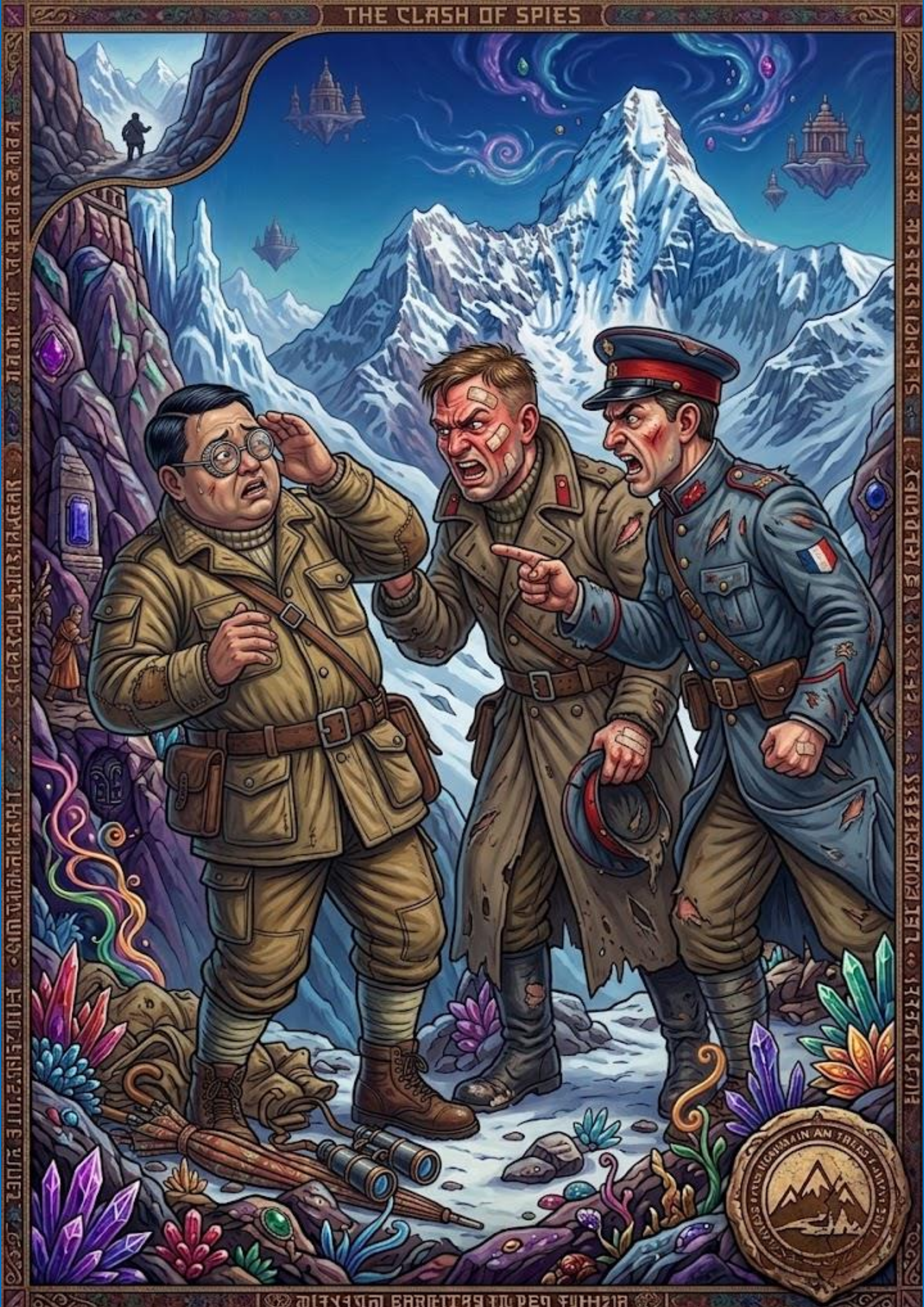
The lama was deeply remorseful that the fight had broken out because of him. As he was feeling weak, a coolie dropped a few drops of alcohol into his mouth under the guise of medicine. The spies' baggage was opened and searched, and Kim found his valuable documents.

The lama ordered them to set off across the snow under the moonlight. Sitting at a distance, the coolies decided that before going any further, they should divide all of the spies' belongings among themselves. They handed Kim the chest containing the valuable documents, as it was of no use to them, though it represented an immensely precious treasure for Kim.

On the other hand, the spies were now left without tents, food, or guns. Deprived of their espionage equipment and their vital papers, their role in the Great Game had effectively come to a sudden end—it had all collapsed in an instant. Kim thought to himself that although Hurree Babu must be cold and hungry, he would be ecstatic knowing the precious documents were safe in Kim's hands.

Both spies were in terrible shape and consumed by rage. As they blamed each other and cursed Hurree Babu, the Babu put on an act of being thoroughly terrified. The Russian, whom Kim had battered, was in severe pain. Miserable from the freezing cold, they demanded that Hurree Babu find a solution.

Hurree Babu told them they were fortunate not to have been killed by the coolies, who, if not actively hunting them, had likely fled far up the mountains. He added that his Rajah was ninety miles away and couldn't possibly send funds over such a distance to help them reach the nearest town. In reality, far from offering aid, the Rajah would have thrown them straight into prison had he learned that a holy man was harmed at their hands.

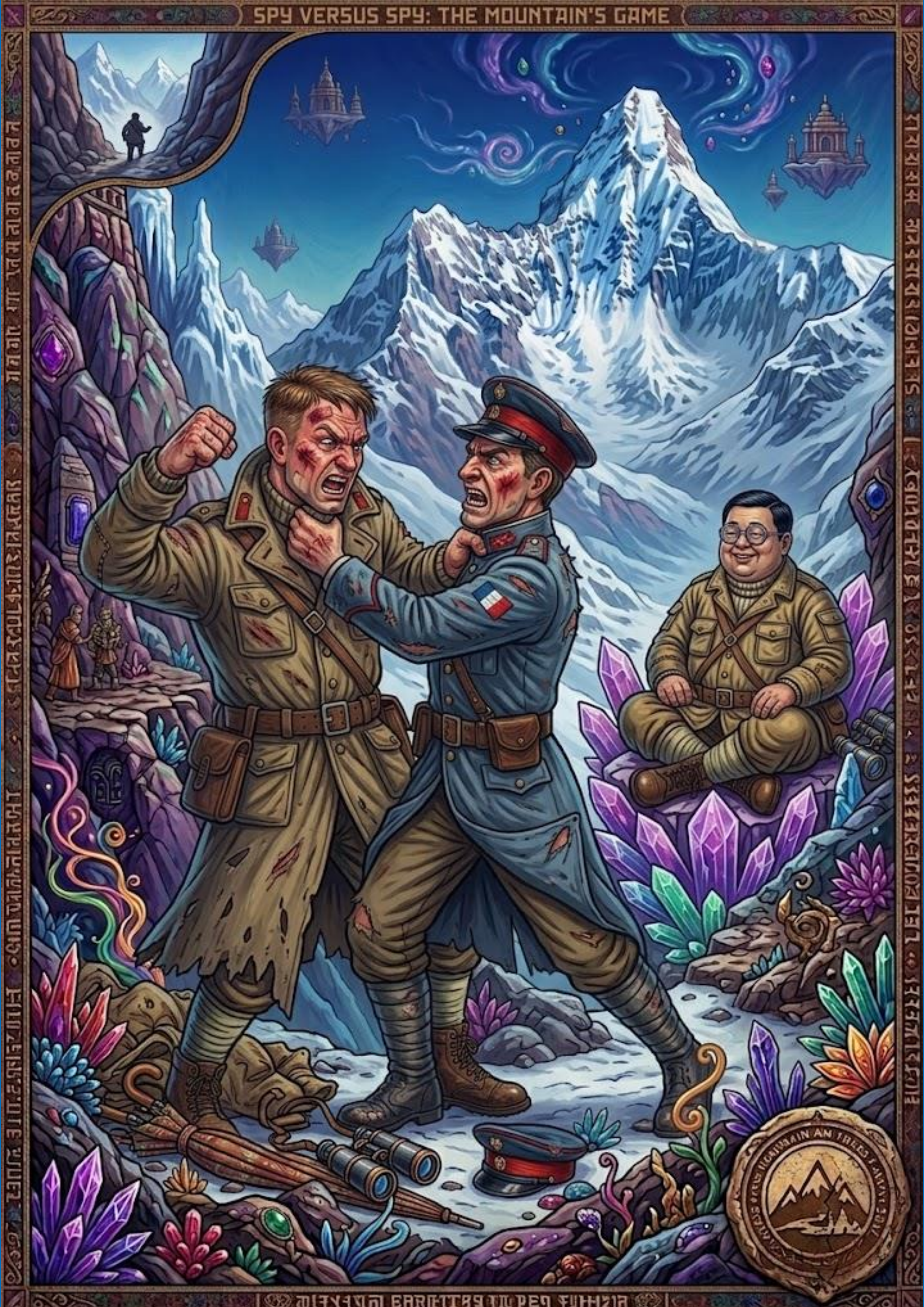

THE CLASH OF SPIES

When Hurree Babu repeated this several times, they ordered him to be quiet, to which he replied that by moving from one village to the next, they could still eventually reach their destination.

When Hurree Babu inquired as to why they had struck the holy lama, they retorted, "Do we look like fools to be wandering aimlessly through desolate hills like beggars? Naturally, we have a purpose here!" Hurree Babu laughed inwardly, though he kept silent.

One spy remarked to the other, "Do you have any idea how much precious gear we've lost?" With that, the two dissolved once more into arguments and bickering, while Hurree Babu sat smiling in the dark.

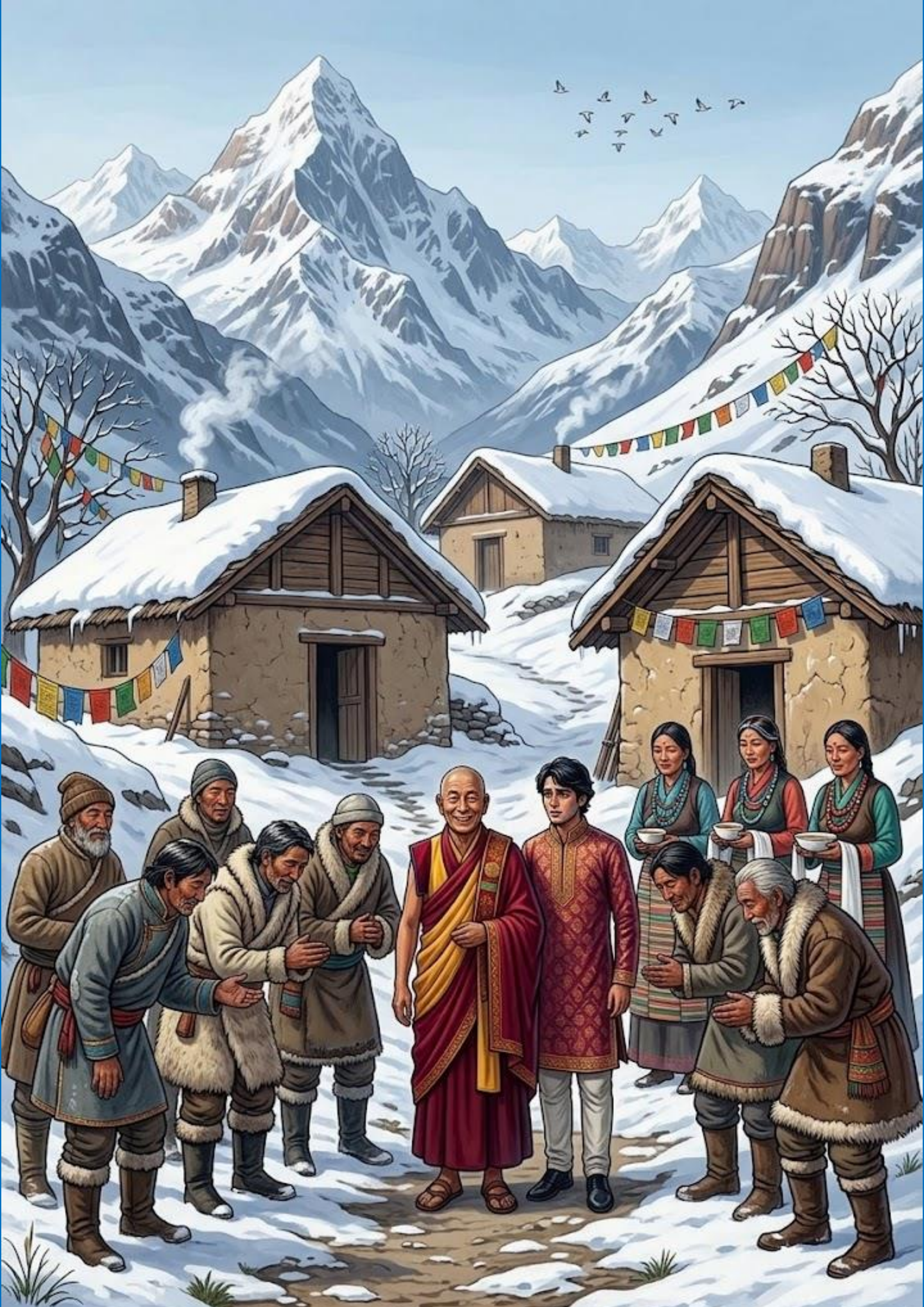
After months of grueling effort and toil, the vital documents of the Great Game were now safely in Kim's possession. Things couldn't possibly have turned out better.



SPY VERSUS SPY: THE MOUNTAIN'S GAME

After resting for a short while, the lama resumed their journey under the moonlight. Following an hour's climb uphill, they arrived in Shamle, a snow-covered valley dotted with a few huts. This settlement was home to just three families—comprising three women and eight or nine men.

Kim was astonished, marveling at the harsh, grueling life these people must endure so far removed from the rest of the world. The coolies arranged accommodation for Kim and the lama inside one of the huts.

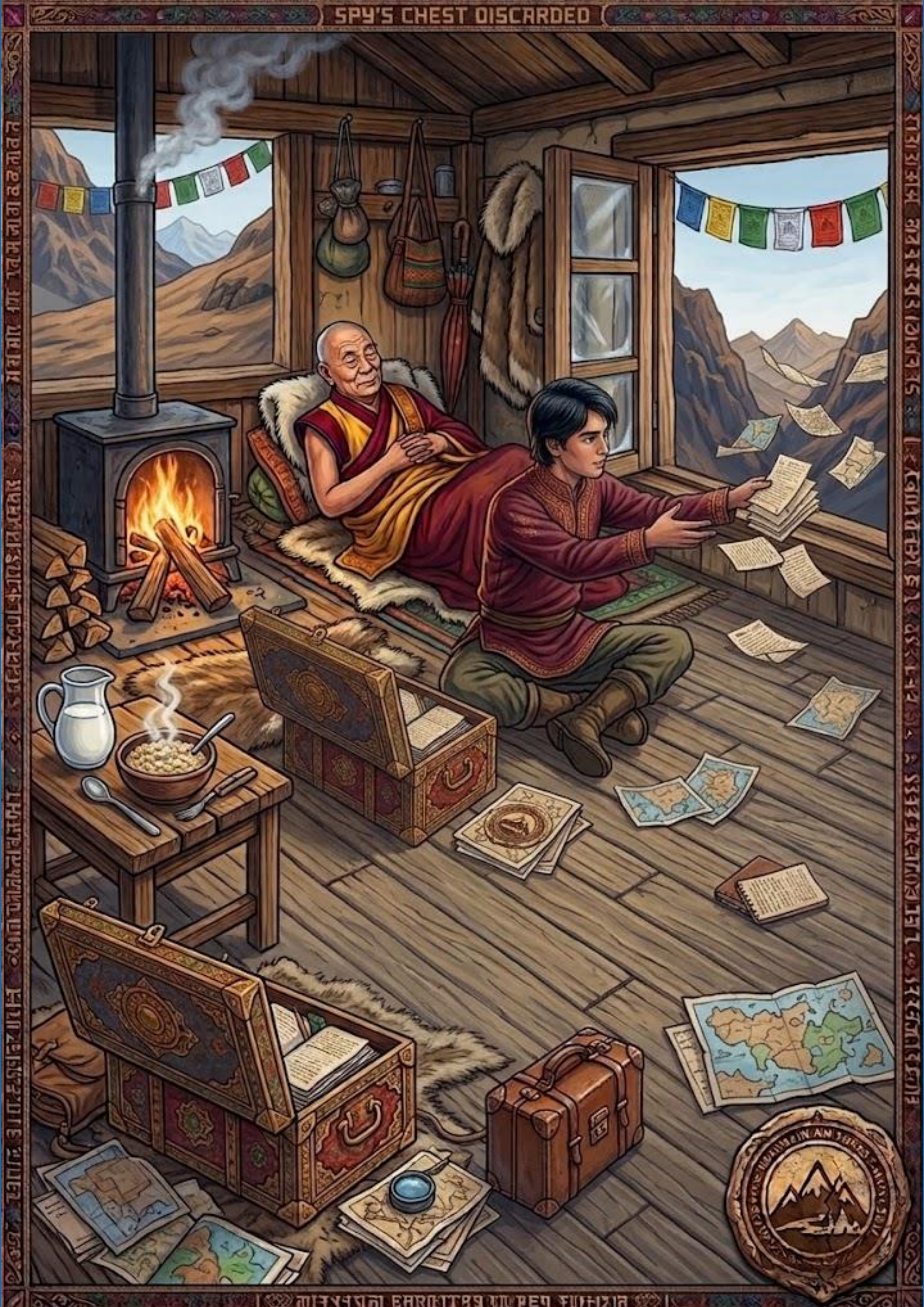


After arranging food, one of the coolies opened a window on one side of the hut and told Kim that whatever he didn't need from the chest could be thrown out of it. Anything cast down would fall into such profound depths that no sound of its landing would be heard, nor would it ever be seen again. Having already handed Kim the chest with the vital documents, the coolies had divided the remaining gear amongst themselves.

Kim and the lama spent the night sleeping. In the morning, Kim examined the contents of the chest and discovered, alongside the critical papers, embroidered communications—the kind rulers used to send one another for high-stakes correspondence and intelligence. Kim smiled at his triumph. He thought to himself that these were treasures of immense value to Colonel Creighton and Hurree Babu, and that they would be overjoyed to receive them.

Separating the valuable items, Kim tossed the useless gear out the window into the abyss below—a depth so staggering that retrieving anything from it would be impossible.

SPY'S CHEST DISCARDED

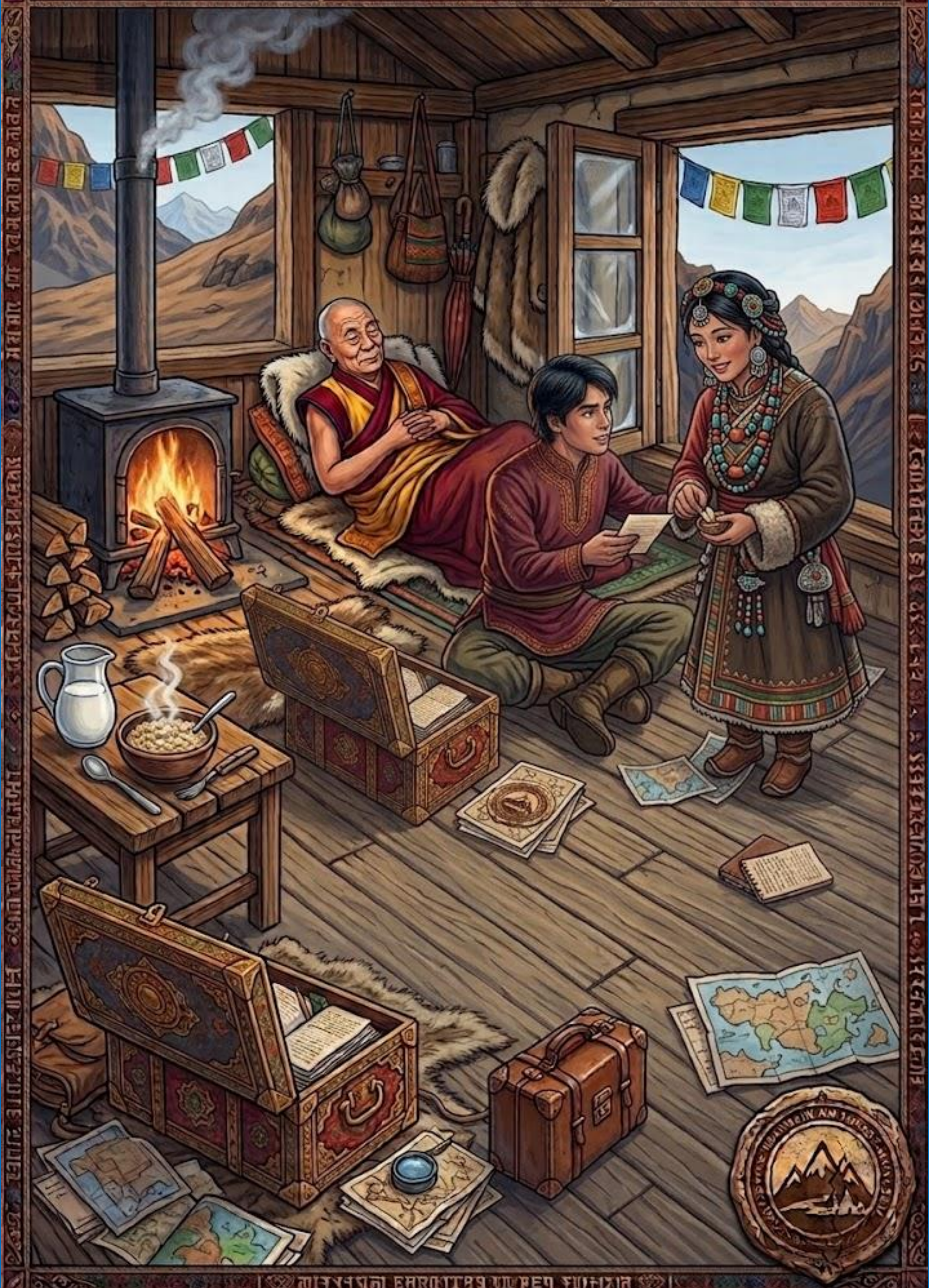


Then a woman appeared at the door, adorned with jewelry in an effort to enhance her beauty. Kim asked her if a message could be conveyed to the *hakim* traveling with the two strangers, promising her a reward in return. The woman agreed.

Kim wrote to Hurree Babu, informing him that he had secured all the vital documents sent by the ruler, but added that the lama was ill and asked for further instructions. Neatly cracking an open walnut, the woman placed Kim's message inside the shell, sealed it back up, and said, "You promised me a reward for doing this. I am no ordinary woman; I belong to Shamle, and even the Rajah knows who I am. Shamle is yours now—everything here, even its milk and butter, is yours for the taking. Take it if you wish, or leave it if you don't." With a decisive turn, she walked away, the silver of her necklace clinking against her chest, a sound that echoed in Kim's ears.

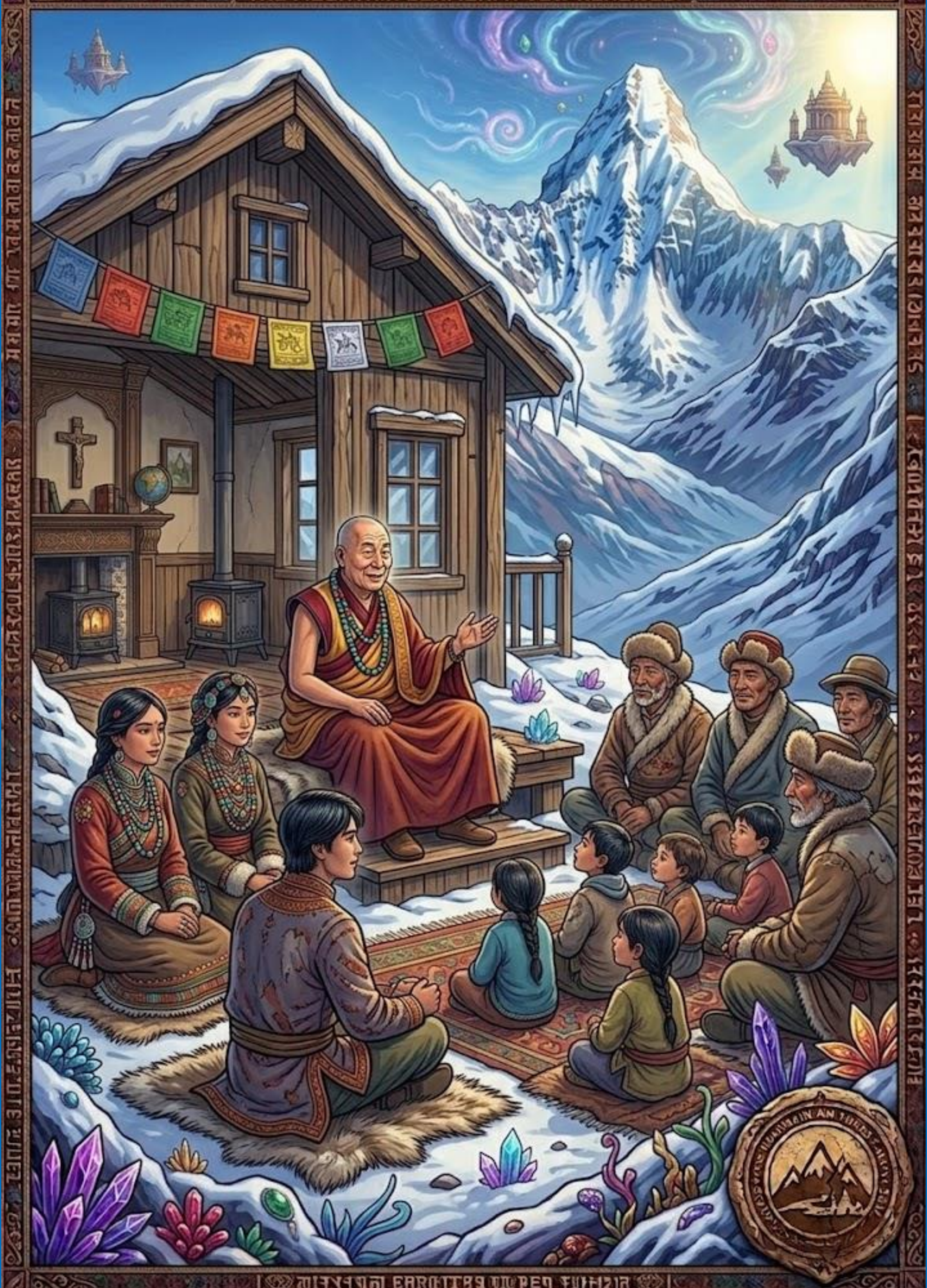
Kim thought to himself, "Here I am, a player in the Great Game, and women are flirting with me." After all the other women he had encountered, it seemed meeting this one was bound to happen too.

SPY'S CHEST DISCARDED



After the woman departed, Kim arranged a wholesome meal for the lama. Sitting in the warm glow of the sunlight, the lama spent the day imparting teachings of virtue and righteousness to the local villagers.

THE MOUNTAIN SERMON: A VOW RENEWED.



In the evening, the woman returned with Hurree Babu's reply: "I cannot separate myself from these men just yet; I am taking them toward Simla. Do not follow these savages under any circumstances. Return by the very route you came. I will rejoin you shortly. I am thrilled beyond words about the documents!"

,The woman mentioned that after meeting the Bengali, she had instructed the neighboring village to provide the men with free food and drink—which they were currently receiving. "Though those *sahib*s are in a pitiful state right now," she remarked. "Why isn't the Bengali leaving them behind?" Kim replied, "Because he is a noble and generous soul."

"Now, coming back to your promise," the woman said. "You told me you would give me a reward. This village loves you, so give it your love in return."

Kim let out a deep sigh and said, "I had so many thoughts in my mind as well, but my revered lama has ordered our departure from here, and I cannot disobey him."

"Leave the old man to his own devices," she urged. "You are young—the one who gave that *sahib* a thorough thrashing!"

"It is impossible for me to stay," Kim answered.

"Why?"

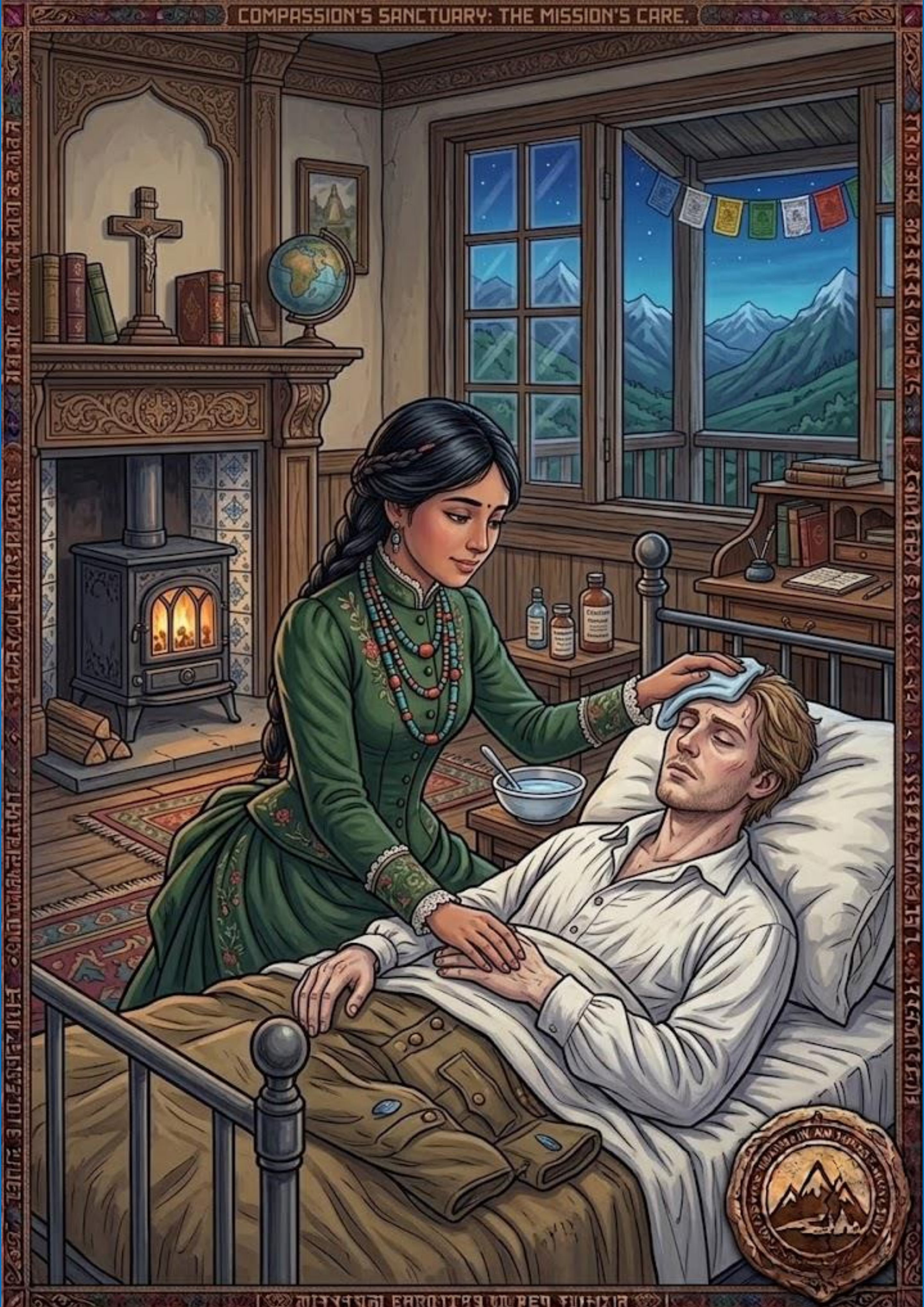
"You would not understand."

A NIGHT OF MOUNTAIN VOWS

The woman asked, "Would you believe that a long time ago, a *sahib* fell in love with me? I used to dress in English clothes at the mission house and spoke English just like them. When he fell ill, I nursed him back to health. Before leaving, he promised he would return to marry me. He never came back, and that was when I realized both the *sahib*s and their God are liars. Seeing you reminded me of my *sahib*."

With a bitter, mocking laugh, she added, "Your God, your work, and your words—all of it is a lie! I loved my *sahib* like a God, yet he abandoned me. Stay here—your old lama won't even be able to walk half a mile ahead. Are you going to carry him on your shoulders everywhere?"

Hearing her speak against the lama enraged Kim. He snapped that he would surely take the lama back to the plains and remain by his side until his very last breath. Saddened by his words, the woman quietly walked away.


COMPASSION'S SANCTUARY: THE MISSION'S CARE.

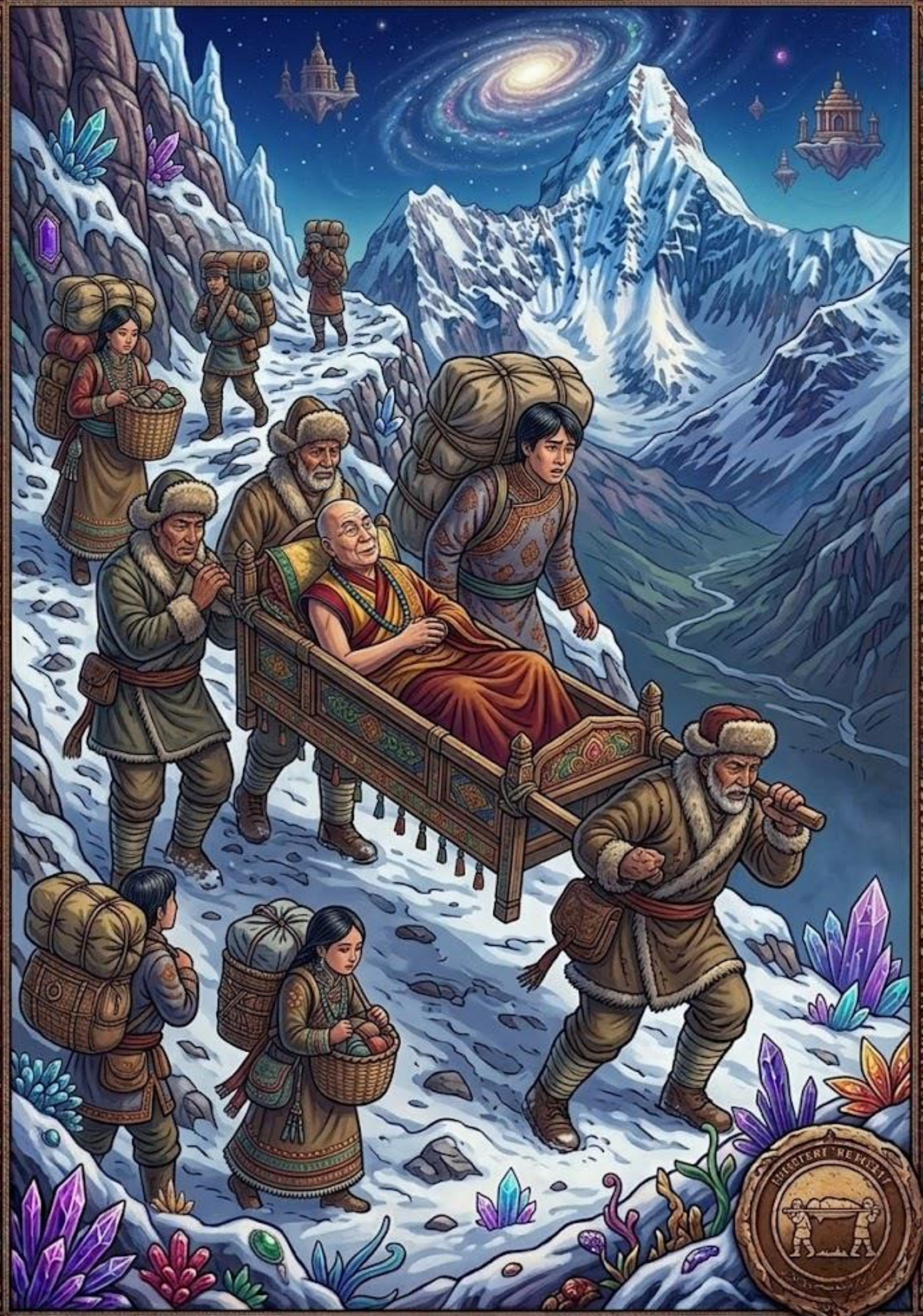
When Kim questioned the lama, he replied that he had reflected deeply on everything. "The mountains called to me, so I came here," the lama said. "I should never have come, for the Holy River can only be found down in the plains. We must return to search for it there. I do not know how many days of life I have left, and we cannot afford to wait for the *hakim*."

Kim expressed concern, telling him how ill and weak he had become. But the lama insisted that resuming the journey was imperative.

Kim arranged for supplies, and the very same woman generously provided all the food and necessities. Men then began carrying the fragile lama on a litter—just as a sick person is transported—and walked alongside them as far as was needed.

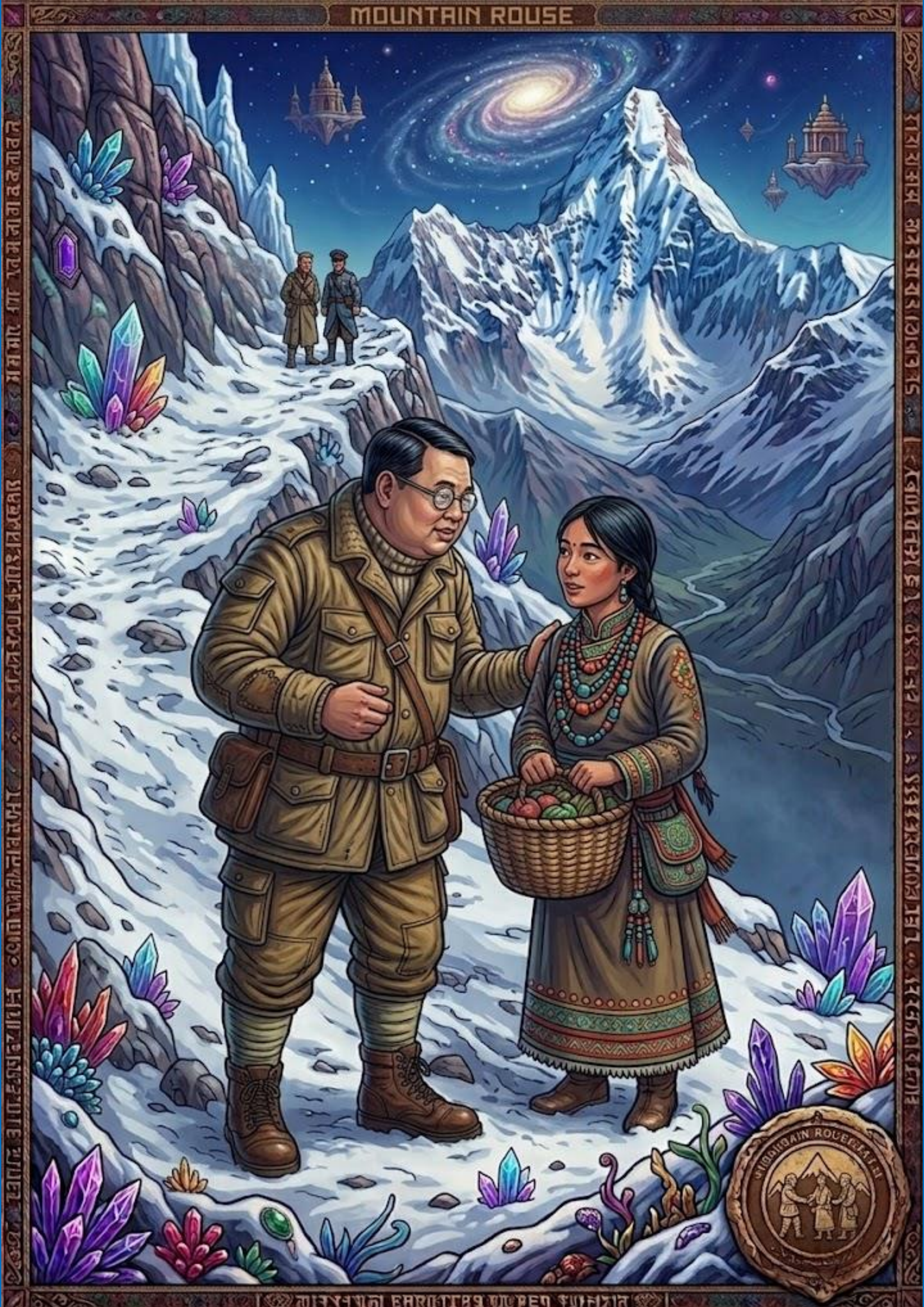
Kim remarked to the lama, "These mountain folk are far more generous and noble-hearted than I had ever imagined."

THE PERILOUS DESCENT.



On the other hand, Hurree Babu was leading the two spies toward the capital of India, navigating through various roundabout routes. Along the way, he encountered the woman who had previously carried Kim's message.

She informed him of the direction in which the local villagers had carried the ailing lama, noting that given his state, they were bound to be traveling very slowly. Hearing this, Hurree Babu set off in that very direction.

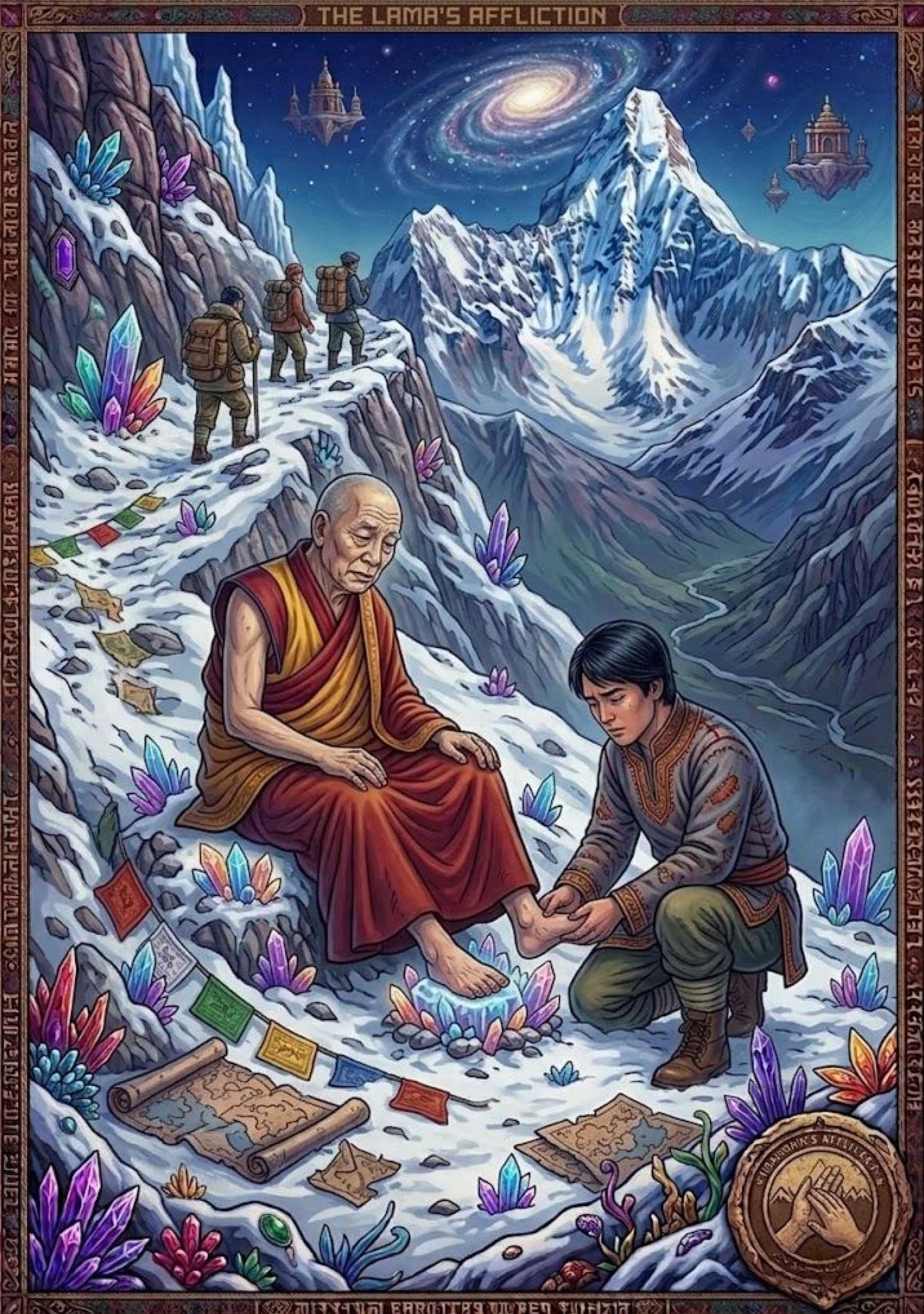

MOUNTAIN ROUSE

Kim and the lama were traveling very slowly. Along the way, the locals served the ailing lama with immense devotion. During their journey, they even had to endure a harsh blizzard. Crossing rivers, dense forests, and snow-covered mountains, they eventually reached a warmer altitude where the men carrying the lama began to sweat. The villagers gathered around the lama to receive his blessings before beginning their journey back home, and Kim gave them money for their help. Once they departed, the lama bade a quiet farewell to the Himalayas, believing he might never breathe the mountain air again.

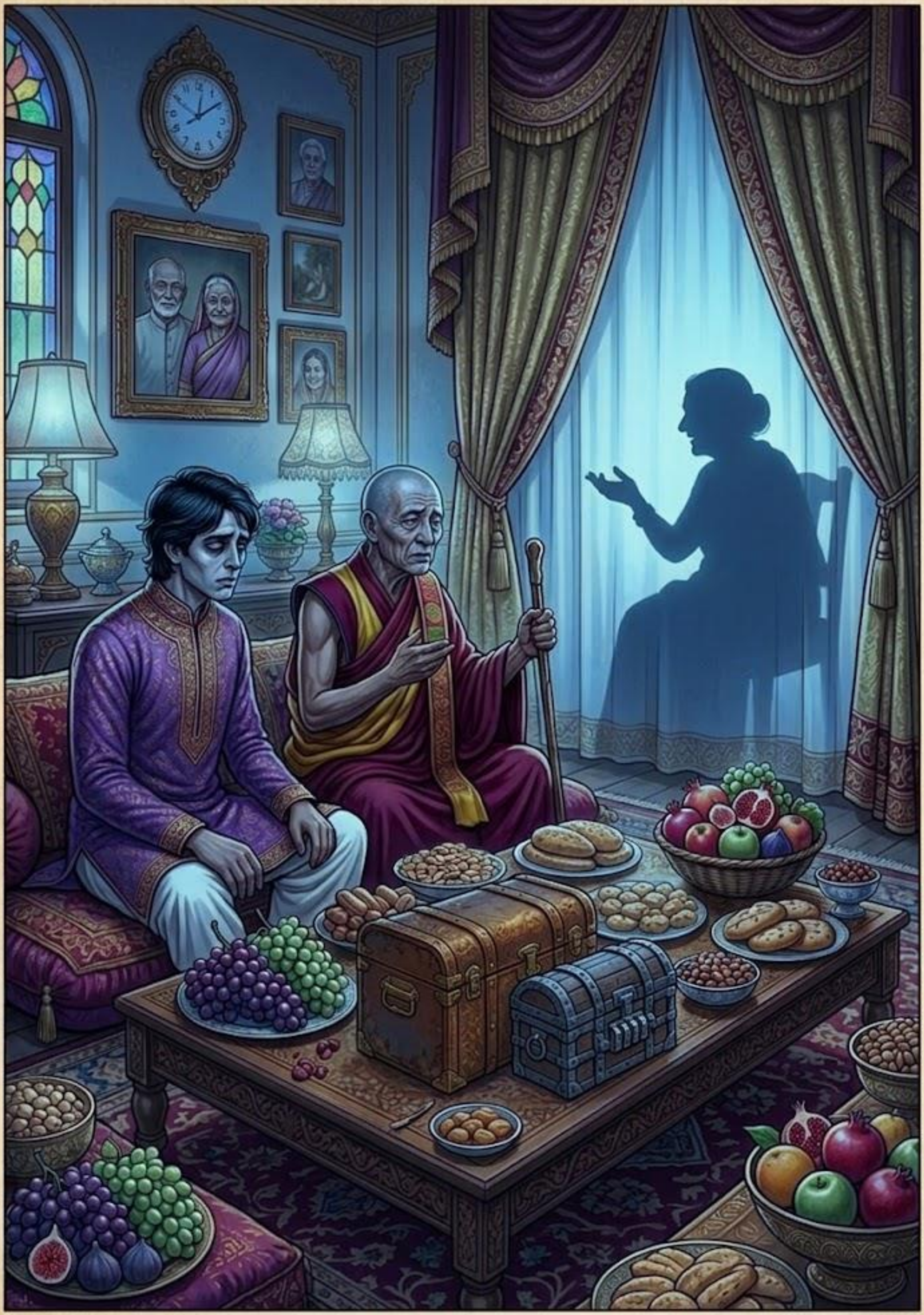
With his hand resting on Kim's shoulder, the lama slowly began descending toward the plains. Whenever he grew tired, Kim would spread out a blanket for him to rest and gently massage his feet. The lama said, "You are the finest disciple in the world. Once we find the River, we shall both attain liberation." He then asked Kim, "Do you not wish to be free from me and live your own life?"

Kim thought of the precious documents in his possession, wishing there were someone to whom he could hand them over so he too could be free while the Great Game continued without him. Now, Kim himself was beginning to feel the heavy toll of illness and exhaustion. He replied, "I am no dog or snake to betray the one who has shown me love. I will never leave your side."

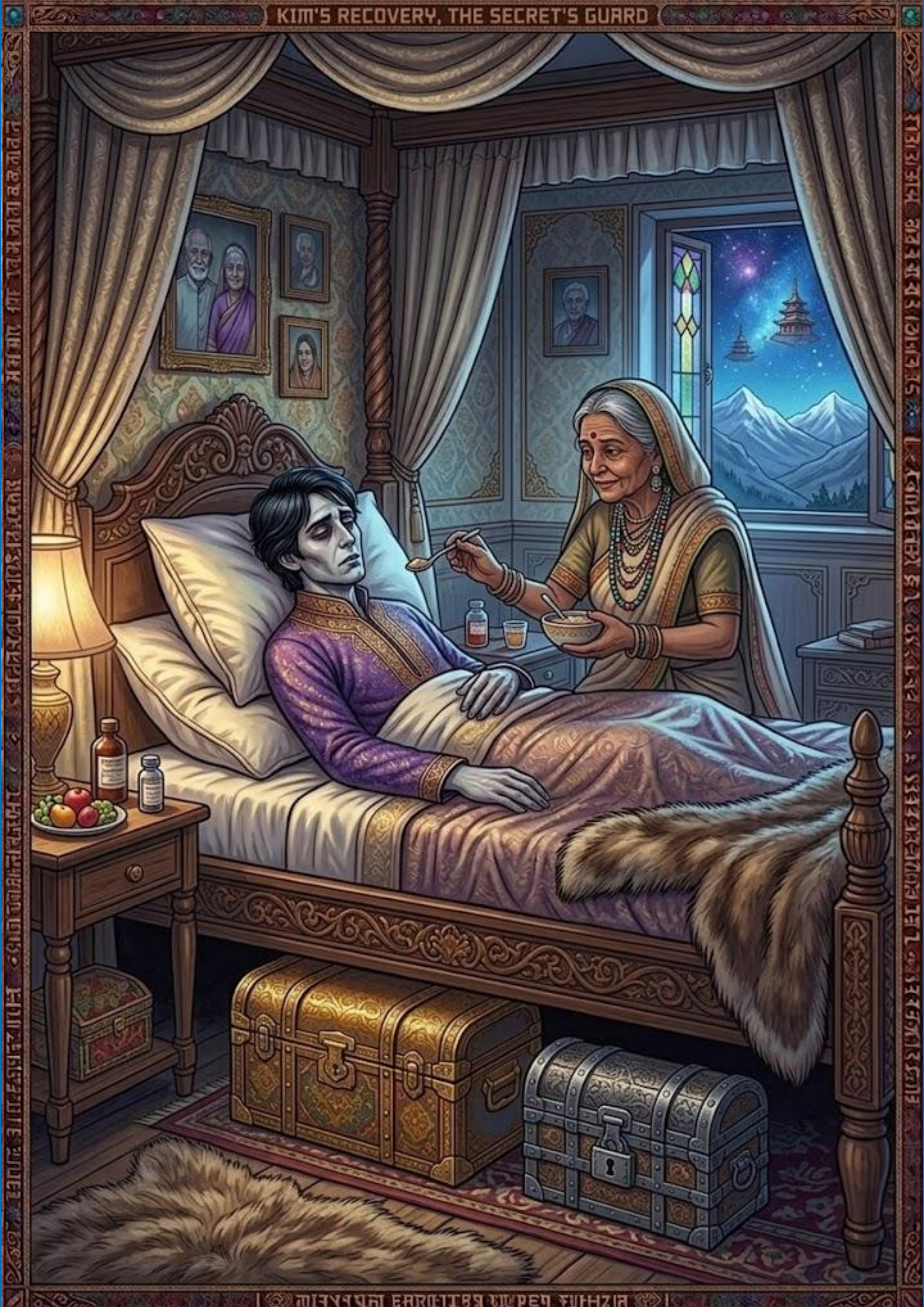
The lama remarked, "You are so kind to me," to which Kim answered, "Without telling you, I have sent a message to the kind old woman. You need support for this journey, and we must wait for her now." The lama agreed, saying, "Yes, that woman possesses a heart of gold. You too are falling ill and growing weak—you must rest and recover at her home." Hearing these tender words of love, Kim burst into tears.


THE LAMA'S AFFLICTION

Soon, the old woman sent her servants to bring Kim and the lama to her home, declaring, "When it comes to nursing the sick back to health, no one can rival me!"



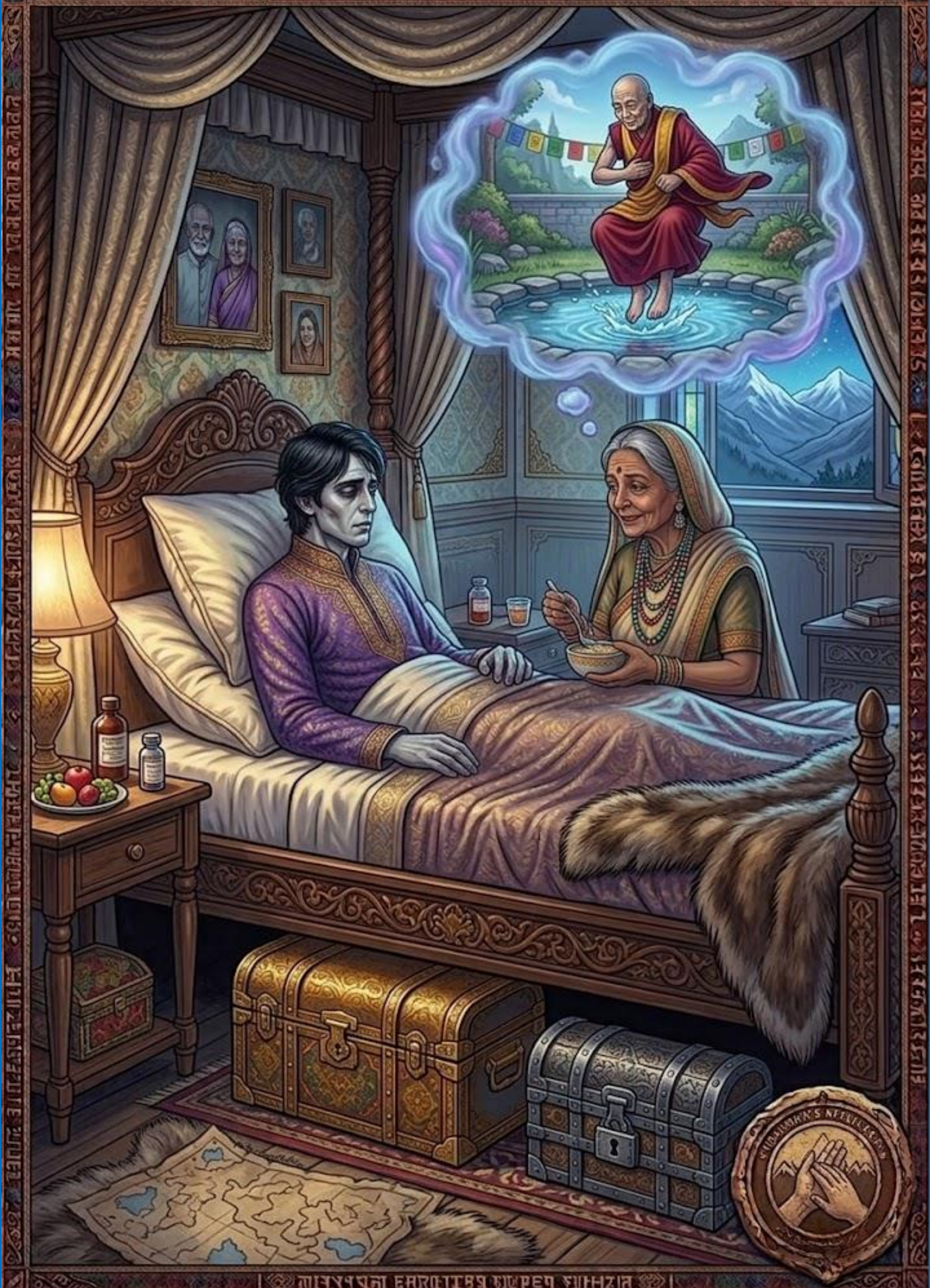
Kim, who was in severe pain and deeply ill, was given nourishing food and proper medicine. He carefully stowed the box of precious documents under his bed before falling unconscious. Surrounded by constant care and good food, he soon regained his strength and made a full recovery.


KIM'S RECOVERY, THE SECRET'S GUARD

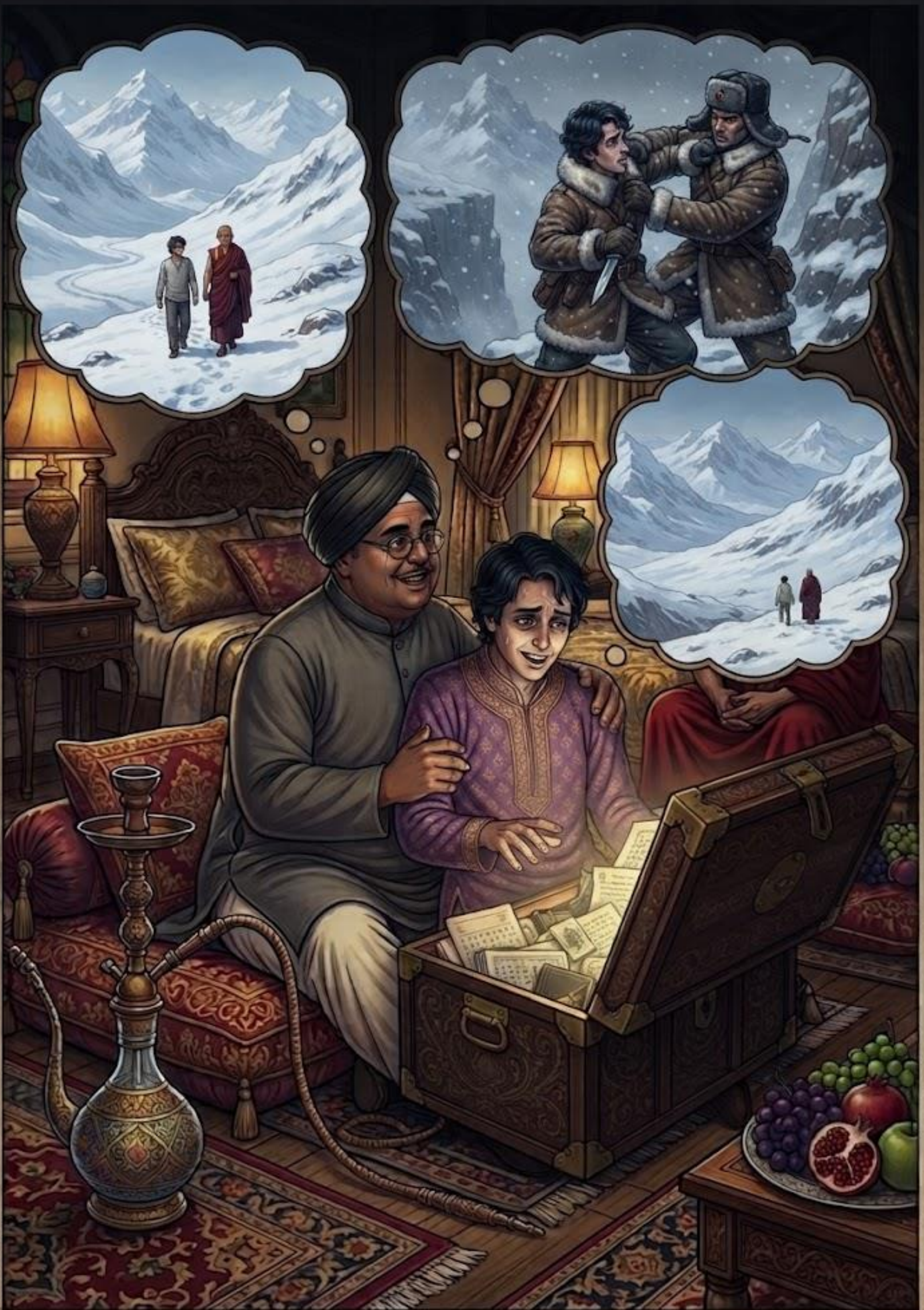
Once fully recovered, Kim asked about the holy lama. The old woman replied, "He is well, though if I could make him sensible with a charm, I certainly would! For two days, he wandered about without eating a single bite, and then jumped right into a stream. I nearly went mad with worry, but he declared that he had found the Holy River and was cleansed of all sins. He is fine now and comes to see you every day."

Kim had completely lost track of how many days he had remained unconscious. He showered blessings upon the old woman, who warmly said, "You are like a son to me. Oh, and the *hakim* has returned as well—the very same one who met you here last time."

KIM'S RECOVERY, THE SECRET'S GUARD



Hurree Babu, disguised as the *hakim*, entered the room. When Kim handed over all the invaluable documents, Hurree Babu was overjoyed and exclaimed, "Kim, you have no idea how crucial and priceless these secret communications and treaties are! I will inform the high officials and everyone about your remarkable achievement, and they too will be ecstatic. Though, of course, all of this will be communicated verbally, as written records are strictly forbidden."

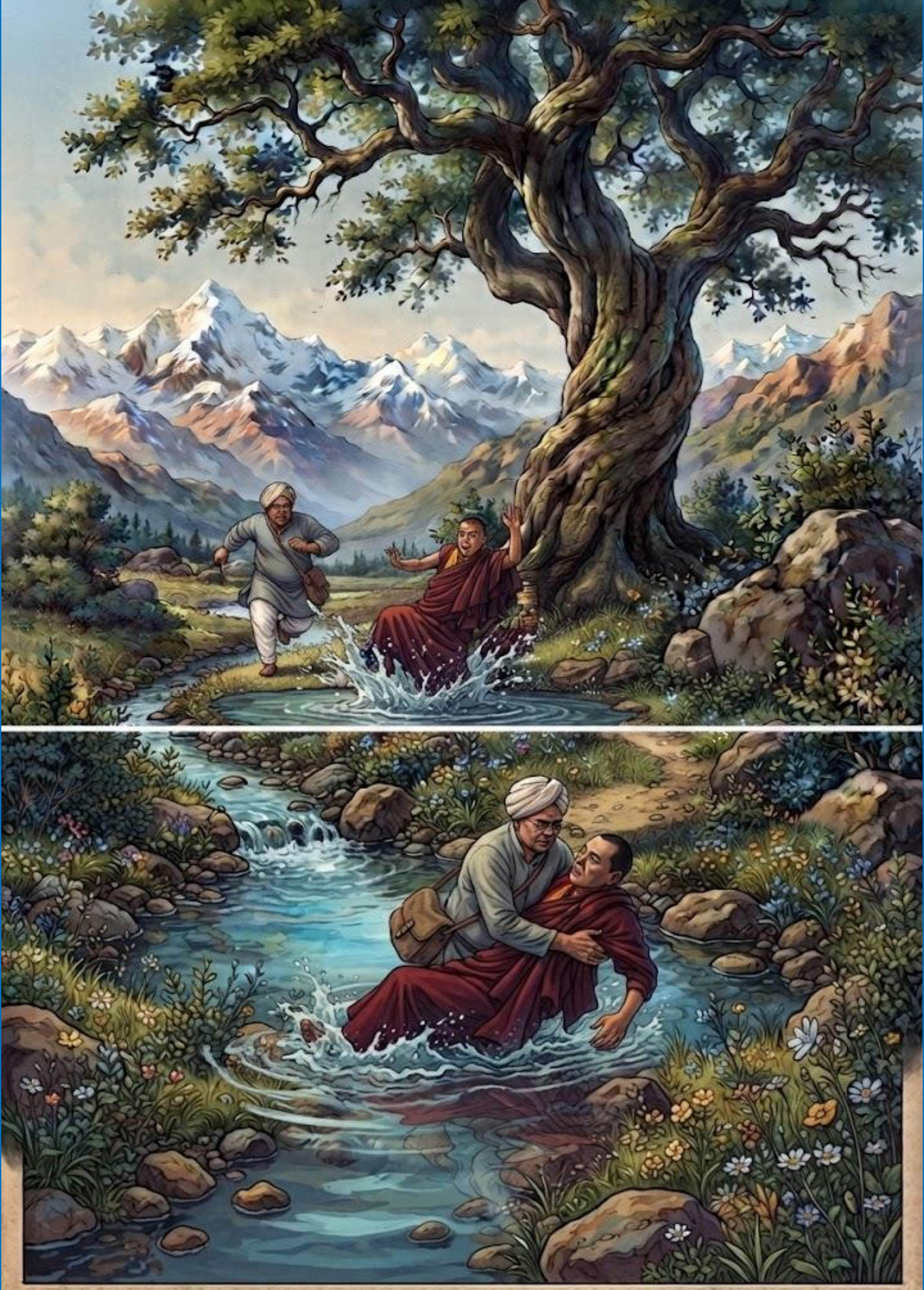


Hurree Babu shared that upon his arrival, he witnessed the holy lama behaving strangely. Fearing for his safety, he quietly followed him. He described how the lama sat beneath a tree for hours, lost in deep, silent contemplation.

Hurree Babu continued, "Then suddenly, he sprang up and leapt into the nearby stream. If I hadn't pulled him out, he would have drowned!"

Kim lamented, "I should have been with him, but I fell ill."

"Now he claims he has been freed from all sins because he believes that was indeed the Holy River," Hurree Babu said. "I must leave immediately. Once you recover fully, come to Simla. Everyone will be so proud of you—especially Mahbub Ali, who was deeply worried about you. I even sent him a telegram calling him here, as I was anxious about the papers."

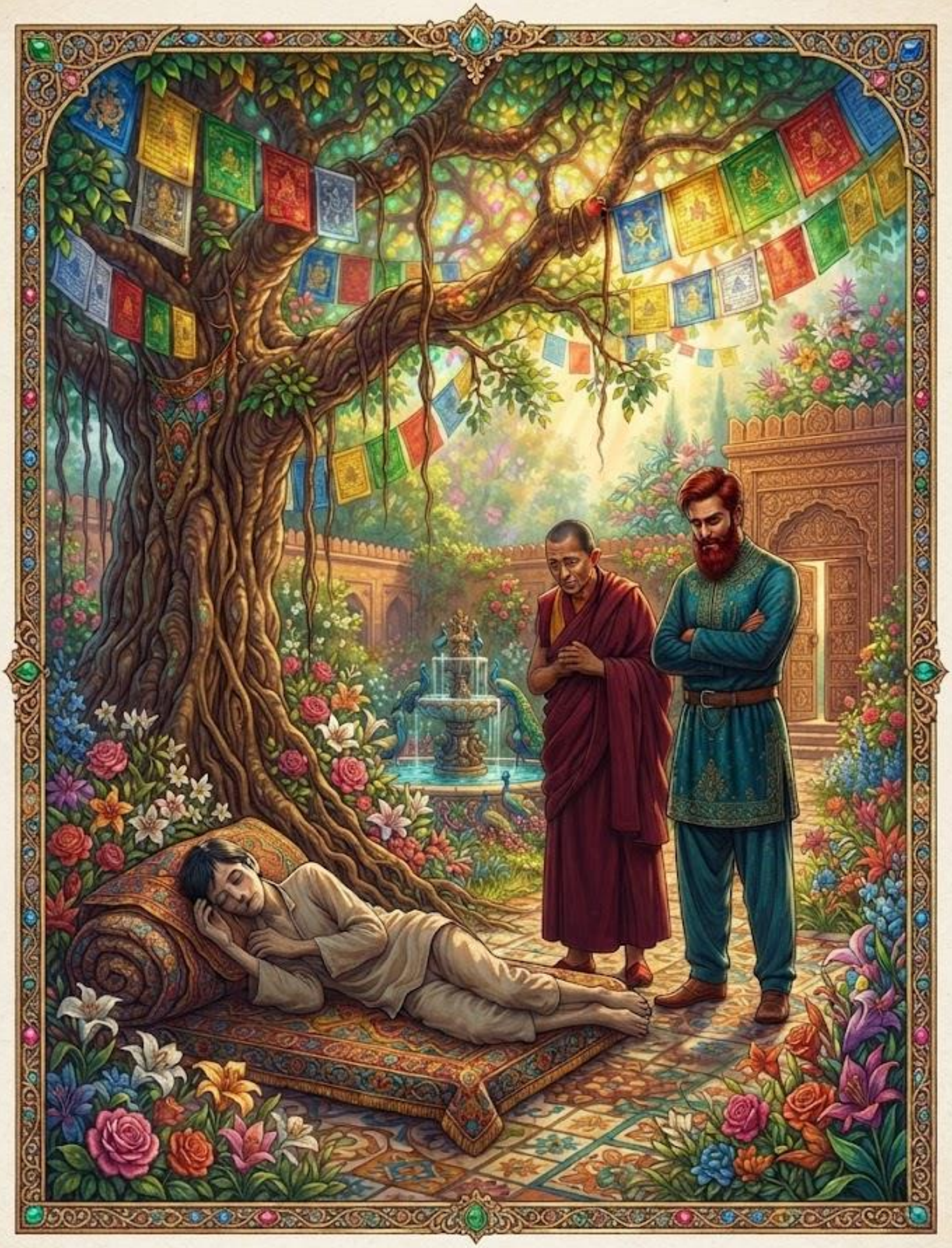


In the evening, Kim stepped outside for a walk and drifted off to sleep beneath a tree. He was awakened by the voices of Mahbub Ali and the lama.

The lama was saying, "No one has ever been blessed with such a devoted disciple—so kind, wise, thoughtful, true, and educated. He will surely be rewarded for his goodness, for it was only through him that I succeeded in finding the Holy River."

Mahbub Ali asked, "But what do you intend for his future now?"

The lama replied that the government had educated Kim for a purpose, and that by bathing in the Holy River, Kim's sins too would be washed away. Though Mahbub Ali did not fully grasp the lama's spiritual beliefs, he was delighted to learn that the lama had granted Kim permission to serve with the government.



- The Sick Pilgrim -
A Journey of Compassion

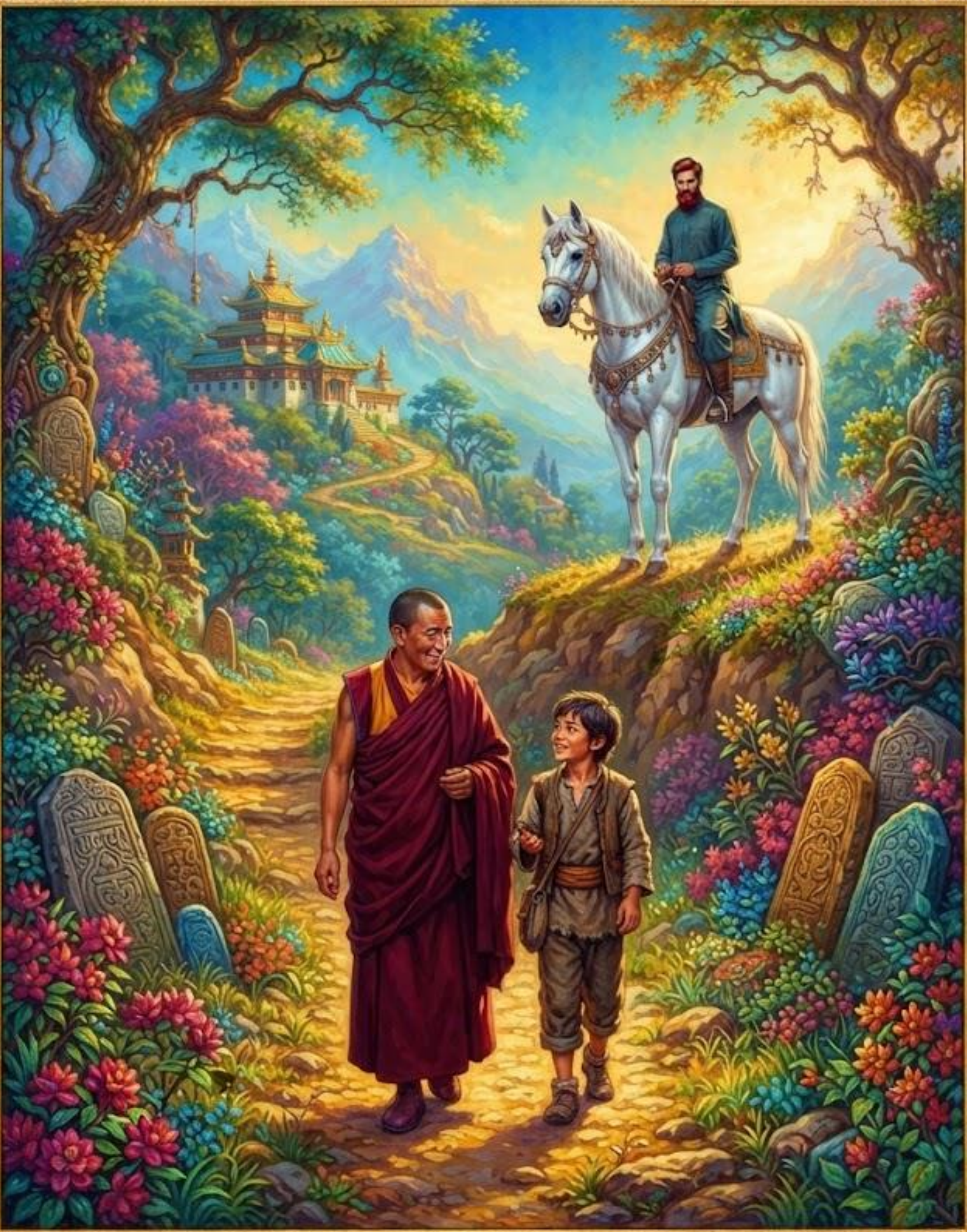
As Mahbub Ali went off to check on his horses, the lama called out to Kim, "Arise, disciple! The Holy River has been found!"

Kim opened his eyes and smiled, remarking that he felt as though he had been asleep for years. They inquired about each other's health, relieved that both were now fully recovered.

The lama said, "I was deeply anxious about your health. I sat in silent meditation, neither eating nor drinking a single thing for two days and two nights. Then, my River appeared before me—just beyond the mango trees. The *hakim* pulled me out of it; everyone was worried for my safety, but I was filled with joy knowing I had been cleansed of all sins. Come now, walk with me to this Holy River so that your sins may be washed away as well."

In the stillness of the dark night, the lama and Kim stepped forward together toward the stream—the Holy River.

Rudyard Kipling
Syed Irfan Ali



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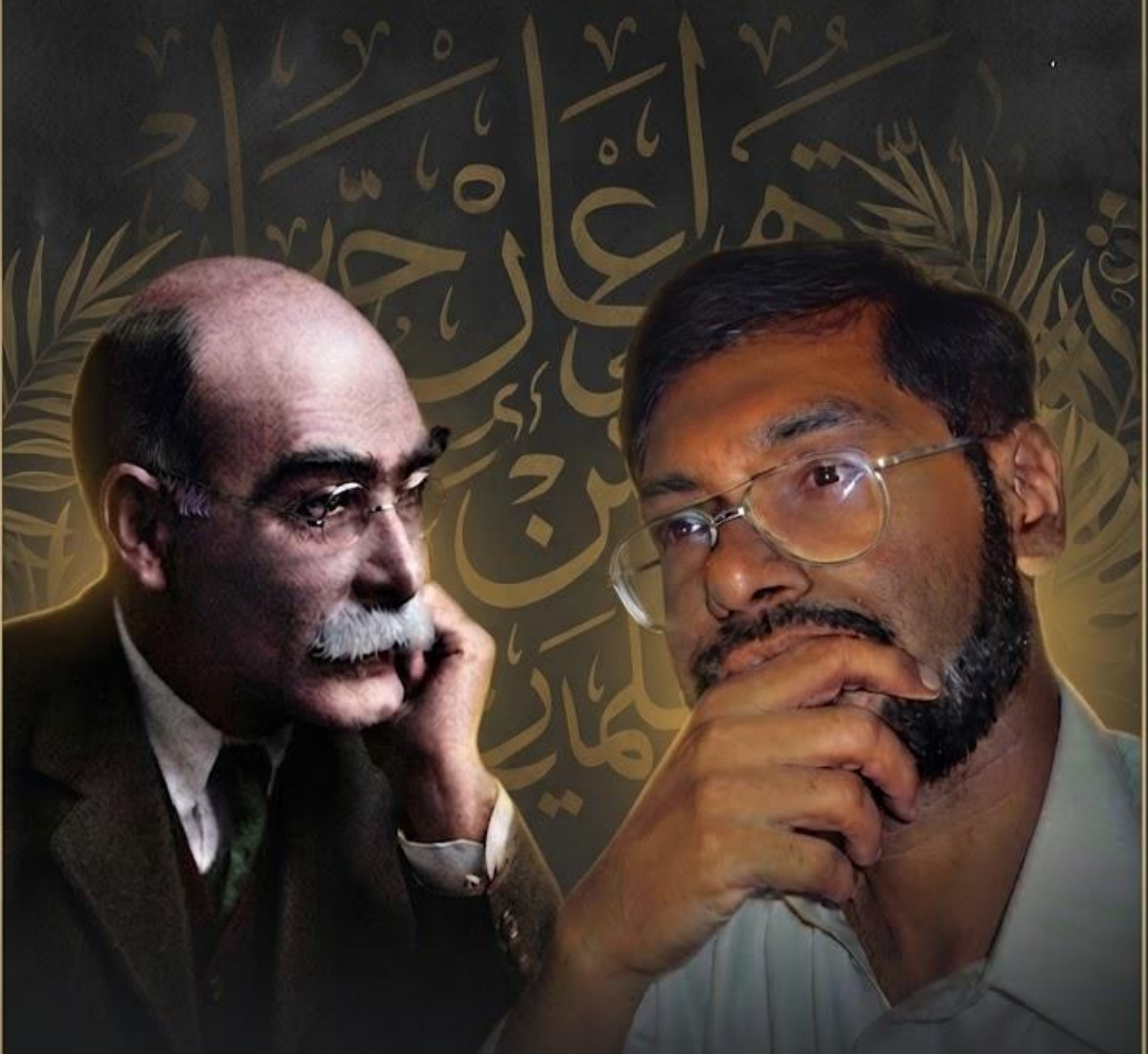
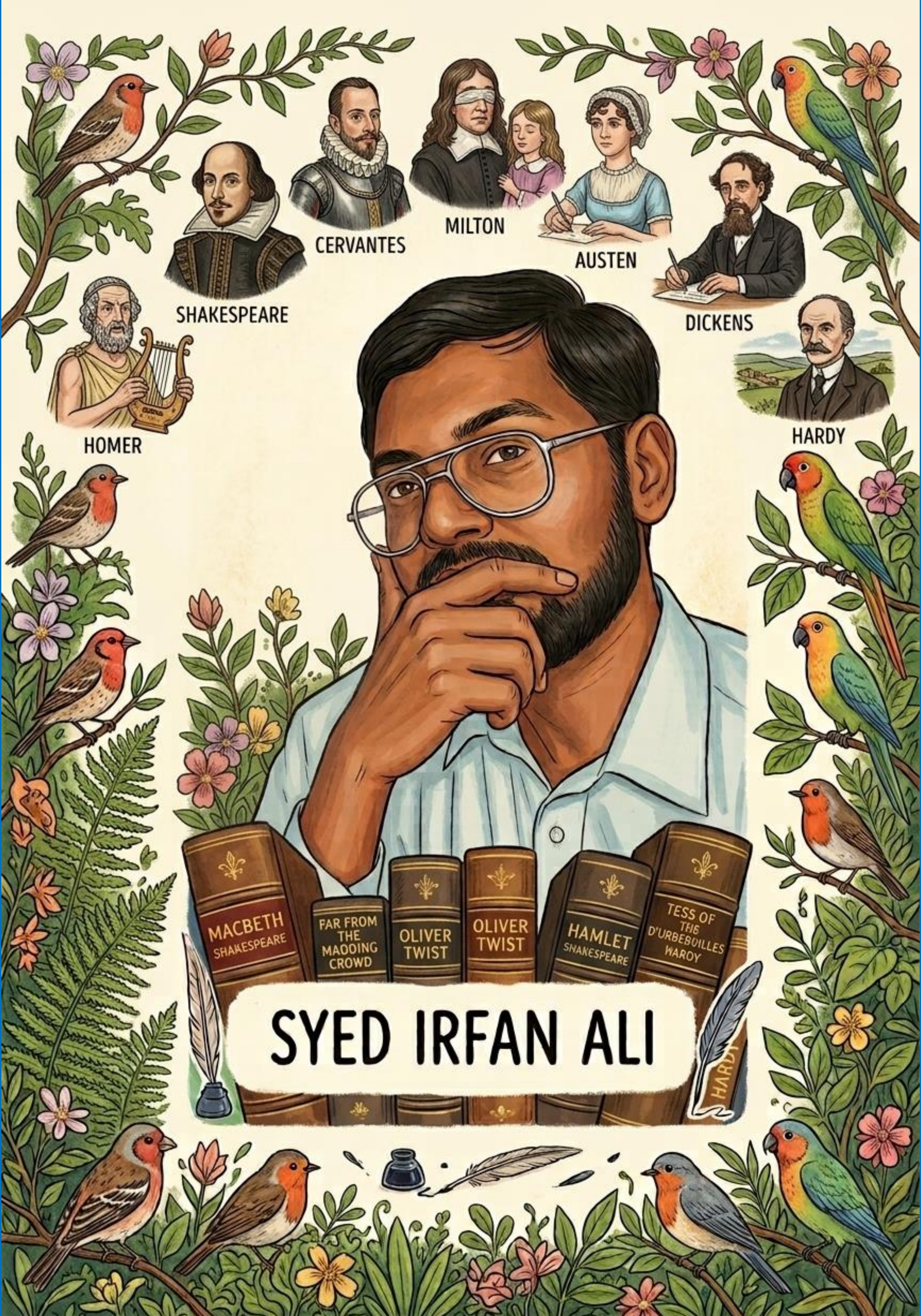


RUDYARD KIPLING.

SYED IRFAN ALI



SYED IRFAN ALI

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MILTON
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MACBETH SHAKESPEARE
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OLIVER TWIST
OLIVER TWIST
HAMLET SHAKESPEARE
TESS OF THE D'URBERVILLES HARDY
HARDY